

## Sister & Friendship Cities



The geographic locatoin of Fukuoka:  
Latitude: 33° North, 35'24"  
Longitude: 130° East, 24'06"

### History of the Fukuoka City Council

Date	Event
<b>April, 1889</b>	Fukuoka became a city. The first election was held to elect 30 city councilors for a term of six years. Suffrage was limited, and half of the councilors were subject to an election every three years. The population of Fukuoka was 50,847 at the end of 1889. The first city council meeting was held.
<b>April, 1911</b>	The municipal system was revised, and the term of city councilors was changed to four years.
<b>April, 1929</b>	The first City Council general election was held with an electorate of only male voters. A total of 40 councilors took office. The population of Fukuoka at the end of 1929 was 213,751.
<b>April, 1947</b>	Under a new electoral system, both male and female citizens voted, and 48 city councilors were elected. The population of Fukuoka City at the end of 1947 was 328,458.
<b>May, 1947</b>	The committee system was introduced.
<b>April, 1972</b>	The Cabinet of Japan decreed Fukuoka a government ordinance-designated city. The number of city councilors increased to 60, and the population of the city was 912,059.
<b>June, 1982</b>	Construction of a new council wing in the city hall was completed.
<b>September, 1982</b>	City councilors met for the first time in the newly-built council wing.
<b>May, 2013</b>	The population of the City of Fukuoka exceeded 1.5 million, reaching 1,500,899. The number of city councilors was 62.

### City Council Secretariat

The Fukuoka City Council Secretariat was established in order to help the chairperson and councilors with their activities.

The secretariat comprises the General Affairs & Secretary Section, the Procedure Section and the Research & Legal Affairs Section. These sections are in charge of clerical work and research for the plenary assembly and committee meetings.

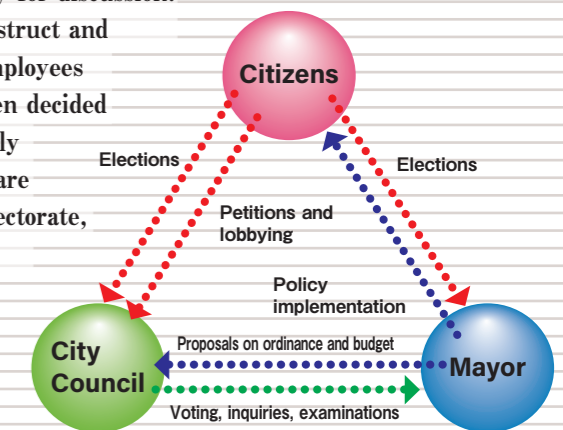
## Fukuoka City Council

# Outline of the Fukuoka City Council

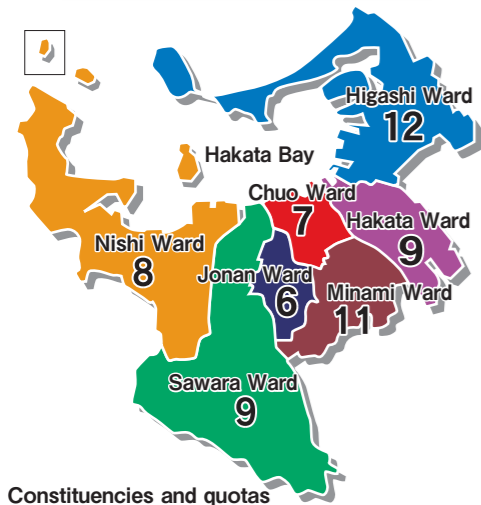
### Japan's Local Government System

In Japan's local government system, prefectures and municipalities oversee local affairs in accordance with the Japanese Constitution. For example, municipalities focus on public services such as education, social welfare and water supply and sewage services. On the other hand, prefectural governments are responsible for multiple municipalities over a wider area. The City of Fukuoka, however, is authorized to perform some prefectural-level responsibilities, because the city is a government ordinance-designated city with a population of over 500,000. This status means the city is entitled to greater authority than other municipalities.

Local public entities comprise a decision-making assembly or council and the leader of the executive body. The assembly has the overall authority to make decisions on agenda items submitted to the assembly for discussion. The leader's role is to instruct and supervise government employees to carry out what has been decided by the assembly. Assembly members and the leader are directly elected by the electorate, and better governance is ensured through the separation of powers, mutual checks and cooperating with each other.



## Citizens and the City Council



### Elections

Citizens aged 18 years and older have the right to vote in city council elections. Citizens aged 25 years and older can run for council. The Fukuoka City Council consists of 62 members elected from seven electoral constituencies that correspond with the city's administrative wards, each of which has a set quota of councilors to elect.

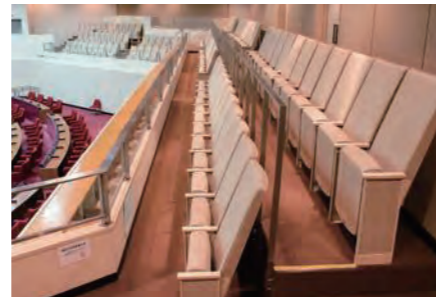
### Petitions and Lobbying

Citizens can make requests about public administration to the City Council through petitions. This process can be done either through a city councilor or through a direct lobby to the City Council, but both are submitted in writing. The contents of petitions are reviewed by a council committee before the Council itself chooses whether to adopt the petition or not. Petitioners are then notified of the outcome, and adopted petitions are passed to the relevant department, such as the Mayor, to be implemented. Petitions sent directly to a committee by lobbyists are distributed to each committee

member, but a decision on whether or not to adopt a proposal will not be issued.

### Observing a City Council Session

Council sessions are open to the public for anyone to observe. Members of the public can also observe committee meetings.



Observation gallery in the City Council Chamber

### Direct Requests

If a citizen obtains a specific number of voters' signatures, they may submit a request to dissolve the City Council or to dismiss a councilor.

### Inspections and Audits

The City Council has the power to inspect official documents and request audits.

### Inquiries

The City Council can perform investigations into city administration and, when necessary, can summon related persons for testimony or request the submission of records.

### Submission of Written Opinions

The City Council can submit written opinions concerning the city's public interest to relevant administrative organs of the national and prefectural governments, such as the National Diet.

### Resolutions (Legislative Powers)

The most fundamental duty of the City Council is to make decisions on important matters such as ordinance and budgets.

### Elections

The chairperson, vice chairperson and members of the Election Management Committee are elected by the City Council.

### Approvals

The City Council decides whether to approve deputy mayors and city auditors appointed by the mayor.

## Powers of the City Council

The City Council has the authority to make resolutions, to conduct inquiries and to perform audits etc. to ensure that it properly performs its duties as representatives of the people. The Council carries out the following:

## Structure of the City Council

### City Councilors

Fukuoka City Council is made up of 62 councilors. Councilors serve for a term of four years.

### Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

The chairperson and vice chairperson of the City Council are elected from its members. The chairperson of the City Council represents the Council and presides over its meetings. The vice chairperson takes over the duties of the chairperson in his/her absence.

### Political Factions

There are several political factions formed by councilors who share similar opinions and ways of thinking in the Fukuoka City Council.

## City Council Meetings

There are two types of meetings held in the City Council, both of which are convened by the mayor: regularly scheduled sessions and emergency sessions when necessary. Both sessions must finish within the predetermined period, during which, the plenary assembly as well as committee meetings are held to examine and adopt proposed items on the agenda. Regular sessions are held four times a year: in either February or March, and in June, September and December. In principle, the City Council has to reach a conclusion on items on the agenda by the due date. However, if they are unable to do so, they may convene committee meetings to continue examining the item.

### Plenary Assembly

The plenary assembly involves all councilors, where they make the final decisions on all items on the agenda. A session cannot be convened without at least half of all councilors present. A majority of votes is required to make decisions.

### Committees

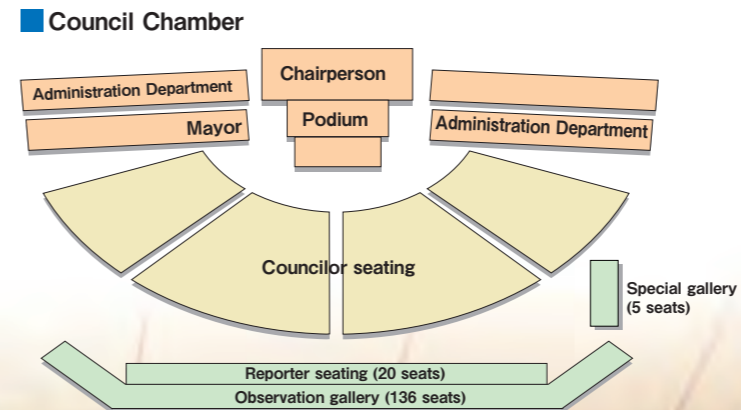
Committees of a small number of people are established for the technical review of proposed legislation. There are three types of committees: standing committees, special committees and City Council management committees.

### Standing Committees

There are five standing committees in the City Council. Each city councilor belongs to one of the five committees.



Standing Committee Chamber



General & Financial Affairs Committee (12 members)	General planning, international relations, finances, local communities, disaster safety, etc.
Education & Childcare Affairs Committee (13 members)	Childcare, education, etc.
Economic Affairs Committee (12 members)	Commerce and industry, tourism, culture, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, port facilities, etc.
Welfare & Civic Affairs Committee (13 members)	Social welfare, health and hygiene, housing, construction, urban planning, parks, etc.
Environmental Affairs Committee (12 members)	Environment, waste and recycling, roads, sewerage, rivers, fire prevention, water supply, subways, etc.

### Special Committees

Special committees are set up to review initial budgets and account settlements. They are also set up when issues arise that require special examinations or inquiries.

### City Council Management Committee

The City Council Management Committee is convened to discuss matters relating to the order of the agenda and the procedure of meetings to ensure smooth management of the City Council. The committee consists of 13 councilors.

## Activities of the City Council during an Regular Session

### Plenary Assembly

- Opening of the plenary session
- Submission of a bill
- Explanation and discussion on the bill
- Submission of the bill to the relevant committee for deliberation
- General questions on city administration

### Committees

- Examination of a bill at committee level

### Plenary Assembly

- Reports by the committee chairperson
- Discussions on bills
- Voting
- Closing of the session