

Ogden City Government Structure

Since 1992, the City of Ogden has been governed by a Council-Mayor form of government. This means there is a full-time Mayor and a part-time City Council. The Mayor has administrative and executive responsibility whereas the City Council has legislative responsibility.

The Council-Mayor form of government follows the national constitutional framers' ideals of "separation of powers" and "balance of power" which provides for separate, independent and equal branches of government, i.e., an executive branch with the Mayor and administrative departments, and the legislative branch with the City Council and their staff.

Utah's largest cities have this same form of government (Salt Lake City, Provo, Ogden, Logan, Sandy, and Murray). This form of government is optional under State law and can be selected only by a vote of the people.

Ogden's rich history includes three other forms of government. From 1851 to 1912 Ogden was governed by a City Council consisting of a Mayor, four Alderman, and nine Councilors. In 1912 the form of government changed to a three-member commission. In 1951 the citizens adopted a Council-Manager form of government with seven Council members who appointed a City Manager.

The Ogden City Council is currently composed of seven members, four of whom represent municipal wards or districts, and three who are elected at-large by all Ogden voters. The terms are four years and are staggered, i.e., four are elected at one time while two years later the other three are elected at the same time as the Mayor. All municipal elections are held in the odd-numbered years and are considered to be non-partisan.

Patterned after both the State and United States governments, the Council-Mayor form of government has definite checks and balances. For example, the Mayor must receive majority confirmation from the Council for important appointments, such as choosing a department director or proposing a new member to most commissions, boards, and committees. The Mayor can, however, veto Council action. When the Council passes an ordinance, the Mayor can either agree or disagree and veto the action. If the Mayor agrees, the proposal becomes law upon publication. If the Mayor vetoes, the action must be explained to the Council within 15 days. If, after listening to the Mayor, the Council feels justified in its original action, it can override the Mayor's veto with a two-thirds majority (five of seven members).

The Mayor is full-time with a staff of approximately 700 full-time positions plus part-time and temporary employees. Council members are part-time and are supported by six full-time and one part-time employee.

