CITY OF SEQUIM

FACT SHEET

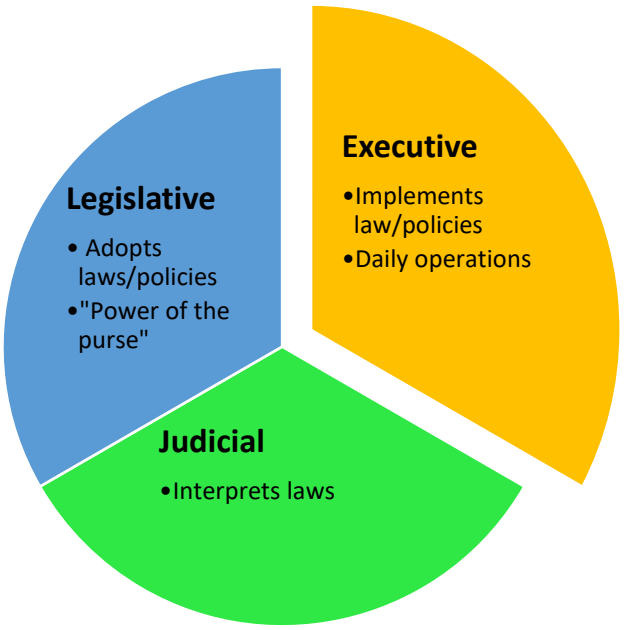
City Council-City Manager Form of Government

SUMMARY

This Fact Sheet provides basic information about the respective roles of Sequim's elected City Councilors and its appointed City Manager.

Sequim is a "code city" organized under the "council-manager" form of government. The code city classification was created in 1967 to provide "home rule" authority giving city governments autonomy and control over their local affairs to the extent allowed by the state constitution. RCW 35A.11.

RCW 35A.13 regulates council-manager plans and defines the separation of powers among three branches: legislative (Council), executive (City Manager), and judicial (Courts). The adjacent diagram outlines the different roles of the three branches.



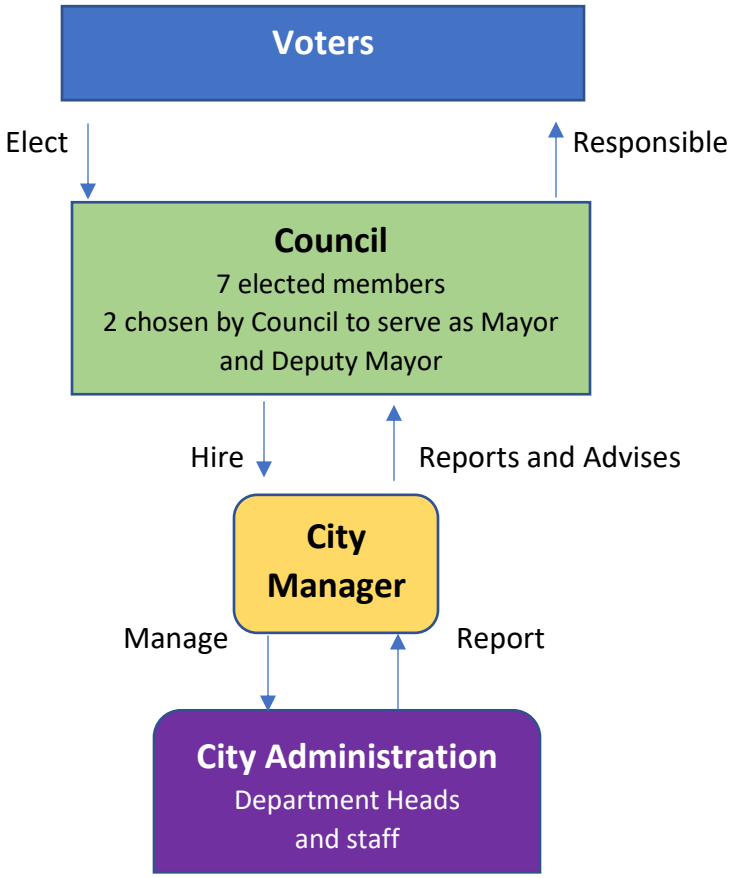
To meet your City Council visit: City Council | Sequim, WA - Official Website

To meet the City Manager visit: City Manager's Office | Sequim, WA - Official Website

BACKGROUND

Under the council-manager form of government, an elected council is responsible for policy-making; an appointed (hired) professional serves as city manager overseeing administration and daily operations. The council-manager form aims to improve public services and make them more efficient by introducing professional management and removing politics from the day-to-day administration.

The following is a simple illustration of how a council-manager city works:



In contrast, a "mayor-council" or "strong mayor" city separately elects the mayor and its councilmembers. Under this form of government, the mayor serves as the city's administrative officer. Under either system, the form of government may only be changed through submitting the question to the voters.

COUNCIL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Sequim's City Councilors are elected to four-year terms in odd-numbered years in nonpartisan races. Although they run for specific "positions" (1-7) the votes are counted citywide. Once elected, the seven Councilors have equal power and voice. The mayor and deputy mayor are chosen every two years by a vote of the Council. These positions are ceremonial only with no

veto authority or power greater than any other Councilor; the mayor or deputy mayor generally serves as the Chair, who presides over and conducts City Council meetings. However, under RCW 35A.13.033, the Council may offer voters the opportunity to change the election process for Council Position 1 so that it becomes a permanent election for Council Chair instead. This does not change the form of government, but merely gives the public the opportunity to determine the Council Chair.

The Council selects and hires the City Manager, who serves at the pleasure of and reports directly to Council. A majority vote by the Council is required to remove a City Manager, which can occur at any time.

The Council is responsible for:

- Developing, identifying, and pursuing the City's vision, goals, and priorities
- Approving the City's budget, which is required by State law to be balanced each year
- Setting rates/fees
- Determining the number of Full Time Employees (FTEs) needed for the City to function well in support of the public interest
- Presiding over certain public hearings
- Adopting or approving ordinances and resolutions, including revisions to the Sequim Municipal Code (SMC)
- Approving the City's comprehensive plan
- Issuing proclamations and letters of support
- Offering State/federal legislative support/opposition
- Establishing City administration priorities through budget and clear policy direction
- Buying/selling/leasing real estate
- Authorizing contracts not delegated to the City Manager
- Developing rules/processes when presiding over Council meetings
- Creating boards and commissions, and appointing or removing their members

CITY MANAGER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The City Manager's powers and duties are covered in RCW 35A.13.080 and involve administration and operations, personnel, and ensuring that the City follows the law. Among other duties, the City Manager recommends items for Council adoption and keeps Council fully apprised of City finances.

The City Manager is responsible for:

- Implementing Council policy decisions
- Operations – how the City functions on a day-to-day basis
- Quality of City infrastructure and customer service (presuming adequate budget is provided)

- Transparency of operations
- Leasing City real estate if the term is under 5 years (SMC 3.14.100(D))
- Other duties Council may lawfully delegate

OTHER THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE DIFFERENT ROLES

City Councilors are subject to the rules of the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) (RCW 42.30). City staff are not. The OPMA restricts how government officials can interact among themselves and conduct business as a way of ensuring transparency and accountability to the public.

Council is prohibited by law from interfering with City operations. "Except for purpose of inquiry" Councilors must address administrative services solely through the City Manager and cannot give orders (publicly or privately) to any personnel subordinate to the City Manager. RCW 35A.13.120.

The City Manager is sensitive to individual Councilor's needs/wants but can only implement what a *majority* (4+) of Council directs.