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Chair

DR. LILLIAM BARRIOS-PAOLI
Commissioner

DR. LARIAN ANGELO
Commissioner

FINAL REPORT

NYC Quadrennial Advisory Commission

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Quadrennial Advisory Commission

June 23, 2026

Dear Mayor Mamdani and Speaker Menin,

We are pleased to share with you the Report of the 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission. As you know, under Administrative Code §3-601, the Commission's task is to study, evaluate and, if warranted, recommend specific changes to the compensation levels of City elected officials.

The Commission believes that the recommendations presented in our report are warranted and well-supported by the data, by the testimony and other feedback we have received, and by sound public policy. We will be posting copies of this report and all of our research on our website, www.nyc.gov/quadcomm.

It has been a privilege to work together as a Commission to address a subject that is truly critical to the effective functioning of our city government — to the benefit of all New Yorkers and the elected officials who serve them.

Sincerely yours,

Carl Weisbrod
Chair

Dr. Lilliam Barrios-Paoli
Commissioner

Dr. Larian Angelo
Commissioner

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission was appointed by Mayor Zohran Mamdani and is charged by the New York City Charter with recommending specific changes, if warranted, to the compensation levels of New York City's elected officials. These include the Mayor, the Comptroller, the Public Advocate, the Speaker of the City Council, the members of the City Council, the Borough Presidents, and the District Attorneys.

New York City last enacted a salary increase for its elected officials in 2016, the year after the last Quadrennial Commission was convened. Over the past decade, the cost of living has skyrocketed, with inflation growing by 31% between 2016 and 2025. Most of that increase occurred in 2021 and the years since, greatly reducing purchasing power in the salaries of the vast majority of officeholders who assumed their current positions on or after that date.

SALARY RECOMMENDATION

	Mayor	Public Advocate	Comptroller	Borough Presidents	City Council Members	City Council Speaker	District Attorneys*
Current Salary set in 2016	$258,750	$184,800	$209,050	$179,200	$148,500	$164,500	$212,800
Recommended Increase	18.20%	18.20%	18.20%	18.20%	18.20%	18.20%	18.20%
Recommended 2026 Salary	**$305,800**	**$218,400**	**$247,100**	**$211,800**	**$175,500**	**$194,400**	**$251,500**

*District Attorney salaries were set to $212,800 in 2016. Further adjustments were tied to NYS Supreme Court judges. Salaries increased to $232,600 in 2024 and $237,300 in 2026.

The Quadrennial Advisory Commission is recommending an 18.2% increase in the salaries of elected officials in New York City from their 2016 salaries, effective January 1, 2026.

- In its analysis, the Commission elected to focus specifically on economic changes since 2021, the period that most affects the vast majority of New York City's current officeholders, who began their first full terms in 2022 or later.
- The proposed 18.2% increase represents what it would take for salaries to keep pace with the growth in NYC-area inflation since 2021 through 2025.

The proposed salary increases are calculated to restore the lost purchasing power in the salaries elected officials reasonably expected at the time they took office.

- To estimate the increase needed to restore purchasing power, a cost-of-living increase was applied to salaries based on the year-over-year increase, with compounding, in annual average inflation for the New York City area each year for calendar years 2022 through 2025.

To prevent further erosion of salaries' purchasing power if inflation continues, the Commission further recommends:

- The Quadrennial Commission should be convened every four years without fail, as required by the Charter.
- The Mayor should appoint a new commission in the beginning of 2028 to make recommendations that would take effect with a newly elected City Council in January 2030 and every four years thereafter.
- The City should pass a law to establish an automatic inflation-tied increase of 2% per year or the actual inflation rate, whichever is lower, if the Commission is not convened in a timely manner.
- If the City Council modifies these recommendations it should provide its reasons for doing so in writing.

Introduction

Introduction

The 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission was appointed by Mayor Zohran Mamdani pursuant to Administrative Code Section 3-601, as amended by Local Law 81 of 2026 (LL81). It is charged with studying, evaluating, and, if it so determines, recommending specific changes to the compensation levels of New York City's elected officials. These elected officials include the Mayor, the Comptroller, the Public Advocate, the Speaker of the City Council, the Members of the City Council, the five Borough Presidents, and the five District Attorneys.

This is the seventh Commission established to recommend compensation levels for New York City elected officials, the first having been appointed by Mayor Edward I. Koch in 1987. The law and its name suggest, indeed direct, that the "Quadrennial" Commission be convened every four years. Unfortunately, during the 21st century a Commission has been established only twice prior to this one – in 2006 and 2015. Thus, as was the case in 2015, this Commission is being asked to review compensation levels that have been, for the most part, frozen for a decade.

The legislation authorizing the Quadrennial Advisory Commission requires us to recommend changes to compensation levels for New York City elected officials "if warranted." To do so, we are directed to "take into consideration the duties and responsibilities of each position, the current salary of the position and the length of time since the last change, any change in the cost of living, compression of salary levels for other officers and employees of the city, and salaries and salary trends for positions with analogous duties and responsibilities both within government and in the private sector."[1] These considerations have informed our work and are reflected in the recommendations of this report.

To underscore a point made by the 2015 Quadrennial Advisory Commission, our task is not to evaluate any individual elected official. Rather, it is to recommend the appropriate level of compensation for each elected office, as warranted by the factors discussed in this report.

The 2015 Quadrennial Commission

In considering our responsibilities, our starting point has been the excellent and thorough work of the 2015 Commission – both the values that established the foundation for its work and the analyses it undertook. That Commission's full report is linked below.

https://www.nyc.gov/assets/quadrennial/downloads/pdf/2015-Quadrennial-Commission-Report.pdf

All of our research, testimony we have received and a full transcript of our May 21, 2026 public hearing, and the relevant law (Administrative Code Section 3-601, as modified by LL 81 of 2026), are also posted on our website. Much of this material is also included in the Appendices to this report. https://www.nyc.gov/site/quadrennial/commission/commission.page

The 2015 Commission Report contains extensive history and descriptions of the goals and structure of New York City government, including comparisons with other cities in the United States. Suffice it to say that, collectively, New York City's elected officials have far greater responsibilities than any other city government in the country.

The 2015 Report also provided detailed job descriptions and responsibilities for all of the elected offices which are subject to our recommendations. We believe that these responsibilities have not significantly changed since 2015. Rather than burden readers with a redundant recital of these responsibilities, we refer back to the last report and incorporate herein its findings regarding job descriptions and responsibilities.

1 https://www.nyc.gov/assets/quadrennial/downloads/pdf/Exhibit_A_-Local_Law_77_of_1986.pdf

Testimony and Written Submissions

Three people testified at our May 21st Public Hearing. Dr. Nantasha Williams, the Deputy Speaker of the City Council,[2] urged that our process be "transparent, data driven" and aim to promote "long-term institutional stability and public accountability," rather than politics.[3] We have strived to maintain that standard. Dr. Williams also asserted that our recommendations regarding compensation be characterized as a "cost of living" adjustment, not a raise. She argued that if public officials are not adequately compensated it would narrow the pool of candidates who could afford to run for and serve in public office.

Rachel Fauss, a representative from the non-profit advocacy group, Reinvent Albany, testified that they support appropriate pay for elected officials tied to specific accountability reforms. These include: 1) banning third party travel payments to elected officials by requiring such payments to be made by the city (or be out of pocket from the elected official); and 2) making it easier for the public to access elected officials' financial disclosure statements. Although we believe that both of these suggestions should be evaluated, our view is that this would be best undertaken by the city's Conflict of Interest Board ("COIB") rather than by this Commission.

Reinvent Albany also proposed that we consider recommending modifications to the Quadrennial Commission process itself, including the composition of the Commission and approaches to avoid long gaps between Commissions. Those recommendations will be addressed later in this report.

Ben Weinberg, a representative from Citizens Union, a non-profit good government watchdog organization, testified in favor of increasing compensation for elected officials to offset increases in the cost of living. They proposed that those increases be implemented in 2026 on a one-time basis. Citizens Union also supported Reinvent Albany's recommendation to increase access to elected officials' financial disclosure forms. Finally, Citizens Union made several recommendations regarding the Quadrennial Commission process which will also be addressed later in this report.

We also received written testimony from several Council Members. Majority Whip Kamillah Hanks, Council Members Sevena Brooks-Powers, Rita Joseph, Shanel Thomas-Henry, Julie Won, Lynn Schulman, and Amanda Farías all stressed that council members' salaries have been frozen for the past decade, while there has been a substantial increase in the cost of living. They underscored the importance of assuring that a diverse cross-section of New Yorkers has the economic ability to run for public office and that compensation should not be a significant deterrent to their ability to do so.

On the other hand, Council Member Phil Wong urged the Commission not to recommend any salary increase for members of the City Council at this time. He argued that the city faced significant fiscal challenges and that many other city residents were facing increasing affordability issues due to rising prices for rent, groceries, and other expenses.

The Commission received written testimony, jointly, from the five District Attorneys representing the five counties that make up New York City. The District Attorneys stressed the importance of analyzing cost of living changes and comparisons to elected prosecutors in other cities. They also raised the issue of "wage compression," noting that their own compensation ceiling undercuts their ability to attract high quality staff and, particularly, to retain seasoned prosecutors who are essential for complex prosecutions as well as for mentoring younger staff. We will address this issue later in this report.

As did the 2015 Quadrennial Commission, we put a premium on transparency. All of our research, testimony we have received and a full transcript of our May 21, 2026 public hearing, and the relevant law (Administrative Code Section 3-601, as modified by LL 81 of 2026), are posted on our website, https://www.nyc.gov/site/quadrennial/commission/commission.page. Much of this material is also included in the Appendices to this report.

The Commission believes that the recommendations and proposals of this report serve the principles of good government and, even more important, serve the residents of New York City by ensuring that we can attract and retain high quality elected officials. It is our hope that these recommendations will be embraced by the Mayor and the City Council.

2 Dr. Williams is also a sponsor of LL 81 of 2026

3 https://www.nyc.gov/assets/quadrennial/downloads/pdf/testimony/2026-Dep-Speaker-Williams-Testimony-before-Commission.pdf

Recommended Changes in Compensation

Recommended Changes in Compensation

The goal of the legislation authorizing the creation of a Quadrennial Advisory Commission is two-fold: To ensure that public office in New York City is open to all, regardless of personal wealth, and to enable the city to attract and retain highly qualified officials — in both cases by providing salaries "sufficient to maintain a standard of living reasonably consistent with the office and the city they represent."[4]

To that end, it requires us to consider several metrics as we shape our recommendation for changing the salaries of New York City's elected officials.[5] As noted, these include the responsibilities of each position, the current salary of the position and the length of time since the last change, any change in the cost of living, salaries for comparable positions within government and other sectors, and wage compression.

Since the last Quadrennial Commission was convened more than a decade ago, the responsibilities of officials have not significantly changed.[6] The salaries of most of these officials have not increased by a single dollar.[7] On the other hand, the cost of living in New York City has skyrocketed, greatly decreasing the purchasing power of those salaries.[8] Meanwhile, elected official salaries in other cities and executive compensation in other sectors have kept pace better with (and in the case of certain private sector jobs, greatly exceeded) inflation.[9] Against this backdrop, the Commission is making its recommendations.

The table in the following page shows the lost purchasing power of the mayor and City Council Members since 2016.

4 Exhibit A L.L. 1986/77 https://www.nyc.gov/assets/quadrennial/downloads/pdf/Exhibit_A_-Local_Law_77_of_1986.pdf

5 IBID

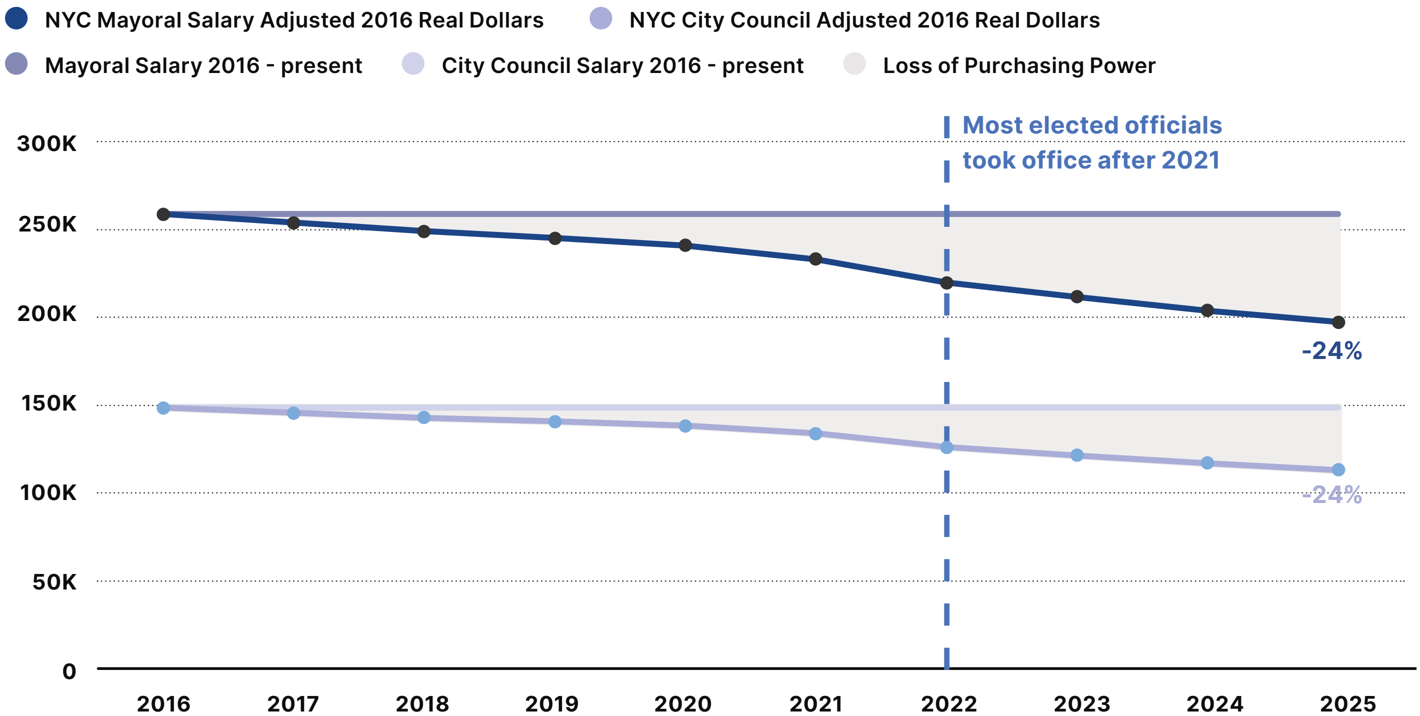
6 See 2015 Quadrennial Advisory Commission Report pages 5-31 for a thorough review of the duties and responsibilities of New York City's elected officials. https://www.nyc.gov/assets/quadrennial/downloads/pdf/2015-Quadrennial-Commission-Report.pdf

7 The District Attorneys have received a compensation adjustment within the past decade, and their situation will be discussed later in this section. Also, elected officials have benefitted from increases in the value of health care benefits, reflecting increased health care costs, but their real earnings have declined compared to general inflation.

8 See Appendix, Loss of Purchasing Power for Elected Officials' Compensation, 2016 to 2025.

9 See Appendices: Executive Compensation; Private Sector Wages, New York City; Average Chief Executive Wages, New York City Metro Area.

PURCHASING POWER



SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (CBSA)
NOTE: By adjusting the nominal salary to 2016 real dollars (the year where current salaries were set) you can see the loss in purchasing power.

We begin by recognizing that the role of an elected official is unique. Elected officials have a responsibility to the government they are part of and a responsibility to the people they represent. They are custodians of both the public's trust and the financial well-being of the city as a whole, as well as advocates for those who elected them.

In our view, appropriate compensation levels must take into account both responsibilities. As the statute makes clear, compensation must be high enough to attract and retain highly qualified officials. It must also consider the true cost of living in New York City[10] and enable elected officials to live and support their households here. As discussed later in this report, this is especially important since changes in campaign financing and ranked choice voting have made running for public office more attractive to younger, more diverse candidates, many with less accumulated wealth. [11] Finally, salaries for elected officials should not be very far removed from the real-life experiences of the people they represent.

As directed by the Charter, our analysis considers economic changes since 2016 and their impact on the salaries of elected offices. To formulate our recommendations for salary increases, we have elected to focus specifically on economic changes since 2021, the period that most affects the great majority of New York City's current officeholders, who began their first full terms on or after January 2022.[12] It is our goal to restore the lost purchasing power in the salaries elected officials reasonably expected at the time they took office.[13]

10 In March 2026, the Office of the Mayor released its inaugural report, NYC True Cost of Living Measure. https://www.nyc.gov/assets/equity/downloads/pdf/2026%20NYC%20TCOL%20Measure_4%206%2026.pdf

11 https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/small-donor-public-financing-plays-role-electing-most-diverse-new-york

12 With the exception of District Attorneys, the vast majority of New York City's 59 elected officials began their continuous service in their current positions on or after January 2022 (eight council members began in 2021 and one prior to 2021). Queens Borough President Donovan Richards assumed office in 2020 after Melinda Katz left to become Queens District Attorney. Public Advocate Jumaane Williams assumed office in 2019 when Letitia James left to become New York State Attorney General. Due to term limits, all current elected officials, again with the exception of the District Attorneys, began their first full terms in their current positions on or after January 1, 2022.

13 Since purchasing power of elected official salaries would be restored to the beginning of 2022, officials who began their tenures later will receive an enhanced benefit in real dollars compared to their starting salaries.

Changes in the Cost of Living

As Deputy Speaker of the City Council Nantasha Williams noted in her public testimony to this Commission in May 2026, increasing the salaries of the city's elected officials is not a raise. It is a long overdue cost-of-living adjustment.[14]

Since the last Commission was convened, and especially since the 2020 pandemic, New Yorkers have experienced rising inflation, with significant cost increases across housing, childcare, goods, and other expenses, impacting who can sustainably support a household in the city.[15]

The amount New Yorkers spend on housing has grown steadily since 2016. Between 2022 and 2025, median asking rent for a 2-bedroom apartment grew by 22% to $4,288 — or about 35% of a current council member's gross monthly salary, up from 25% in 2016.[16]

Childcare costs have increased by 35% since 2016 — and two-thirds of that growth has occurred since 2022. In 2016, a council member with one infant in center-based childcare spent approximately 13% of their gross salary on childcare. By 2024, that percentage had jumped to 18%.[17]

As noted, these rising costs have occurred during a period when elected official salaries have remained unchanged in nominal terms. In real terms,[18] these salaries have lost almost 25% of their purchasing power since 2016 — with more than half of the loss occurring since 2021, when the vast majority of officials started their first full term in offices.

Many U.S. cities have experienced similar increases in the cost of living during the same period. Across the largest and highest-cost cities in the U.S., inflation increased by about 28% on average, with a substantial portion of the increase attributable to the post-COVID period. Most other cities in this group have experienced higher inflation than in New York.[19] However, the salaries of elected officials in many of these cities have for the most part kept up better with inflation,[20] including through mechanisms such as tying yearly salary increases to inflation.[21]

Changes in Salary and Income for Other Senior Officials

As directed by the Charter, the Commission looked closely at salaries and salary trends since 2016 for positions with comparable responsibilities within government, in other sectors, including private employment, and among members of DC37, New York City's largest public employee union. The Commission also examined salary trends for elected officials in New York State and in other large cities in the U.S. Additionally, it considered changes in median household income during that period and since 2022.

In the New York Metropolitan Area, average wages for executives have increased by about 69% since 2016,[22] while the salaries of the city's elected officials have remained unchanged. We recognize that elected office is not directly comparable to private employment, especially in New York City, but this data

14 https://www.nyc.gov/assets/quadrennial/downloads/pdf/testimony/2026-Dep-Speaker-Williams-Testimony-before-Commission.pdf

15 As measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) for All Urban Consumers: All Items, which tracks the average price of broad consumer expenditures, inflation in the New York metropolitan area increased by 31% since 2016, with the bulk of this increase occurring after 2020. See Appendix, Consumer Price Index (CPI).

16 Median asking rent from StreetEasy reflects the listed price for available 2-bedroom units at a point in time, representing the cost a new renter would face entering the market today. It is worth noting that the general rule of thumb is that an occupant spending more than one-third of his or her income on shelter is considered rent-burdened.

17 New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Local Commissioners Memorandum. Child Care Assistance Market Rates 2024. https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/policies/external/2024/lcm/24-OCFS-LCM-22.pdf; New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Local Commissioners Memorandum. Child Care Assistance Market Rates 2016. https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/policies/external/OCFS_2016/LCMs/16-OCFS-LCM-18.pdf.

18 Real salaries were calculated by deflating nominal salaries into constant 2016 dollars, the year the current salary level was established. Nominal salary figures for each year were adjusted using the Consumer Price Index (CPI), with 2016 set as the base year. Subsequent salaries are expressed in terms of their 2016 purchasing power. See Appendix, Loss of Purchasing Power.

19 See Appendix, US Cities for Comparison: Summary Table

20 See Appendices: US Cities for Comparison: Summary Table and Mayoral; City Council Salaries Over Time

21 See Appendix, US Cities for Comparison: Mechanisms for Changing Elected Officials' Compensation

22 Average wages for all private sector employees in New York City have grown since 2016 at around 4% annualized growth and above the rate of inflation. Private sector employees include those working for nonprofit organizations. See Appendices: Private Sector Wages; Average Chief Executive Wages.

does reflect the opportunity costs facing potential candidates considering public service.

Senior executive salaries at large not-for-profit organizations in New York City are also generally much higher than those of the city's elected officials. But it is worth noting that the gap has grown. For example, while the mayoral salary has remained flat, senior executive salaries at select not-for-profit organizations and other public/quasi-public agencies have increased by around 25% to almost double.[23]

The Commission also examined wage increases for city workers, which are negotiated through collective bargaining rather than market measures. While elected officials' salaries stagnated and inflation soared, cumulative wage growth for DC37 members grew by approximately 28% over the last 10 years, and by 12.8% since 2022.[24]

The Commission also examined government salary increases for New York State elected officials and other senior elected officeholders in comparably large, complex cities.

New York State Assembly Members and Senators currently receive an annual salary of $142,000. They last received a 29% pay raise on their base salary in January 2023, putting their compensation close to the current pay of New York City Council Members. However, unlike the City's Council Members, state legislators are permitted to earn income from outside employment,[25] currently capped at $35,000 annually. State legislators also receive a per diem when they travel in furtherance of their legislative duties, as well as discretionary compensation for leadership positions, including committee chairs and the like.[26]

Compared to their counterparts in other large cities, New York City's elected officials have significantly greater responsibility and fiscal authority.[27] For example, in New York, the Mayor and City Council oversee nearly all local public spending. By contrast, mayors in large cities like Houston and Los Angeles control less than half of total local government spending. New York City's mayor is also directly accountable for the full scope of city services, including the public school system, unlike in many other cities.

Finally, the Mayor and City Council Members represent many more constituents than their counterparts in most other large U.S. cities.[28] The Mayor represents approximately 8.5 million New Yorkers,[29] more than double the population represented by the mayor of the next largest city. Members of the City Council each represent an average of 166,237 New Yorkers, with only council members in Los Angeles and Phoenix representing more constituents, on average.

Despite this, New York City's elected official salaries have fallen behind those in other comparably large and complex cities since 2016.[30] For example, New York's mayoral salary is currently ranked below San Francisco, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Jacksonville. City Council Member salaries are currently ranked below Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Philadelphia, and Chicago.[31]

The charts in the following page highlight the change in mayoral and City Council Member salaries since 2016 benchmarked to other comparable cities.[32]

23 See Appendix, Executive Compensation

24 See Appendix, DC37 Wage Increases

25 In most of the comparable cities, city council members (or their equivalents) are allowed to have secondary employment. While they are subject to conflict-of-interest laws and often cannot work while on the job, they can still earn outside income.

26 https://codes.findlaw.com/ny/legislative-law/leg-sect-5-a/

27 The City Fiscal Control Ratio measures the share of total local government spending that flows directly through the city government. A ratio close to 1.0 means the city government is responsible for nearly all public spending on behalf of its residents. New York City's ratio of 0.98 is the highest among all peer cities examined. See Appendices: Mayoral Salary and City Fiscal Control Ratio; City Council Salary and City Fiscal Control Ratio.

28 See Appendix, US Cities for Comparison: Constituency and Jurisdiction Size Comparison

29 https://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/dcp/assets/files/pdf/data-tools/population/population-estimates/new-york-city-population-estimates-and-trends-march-2026.pdf

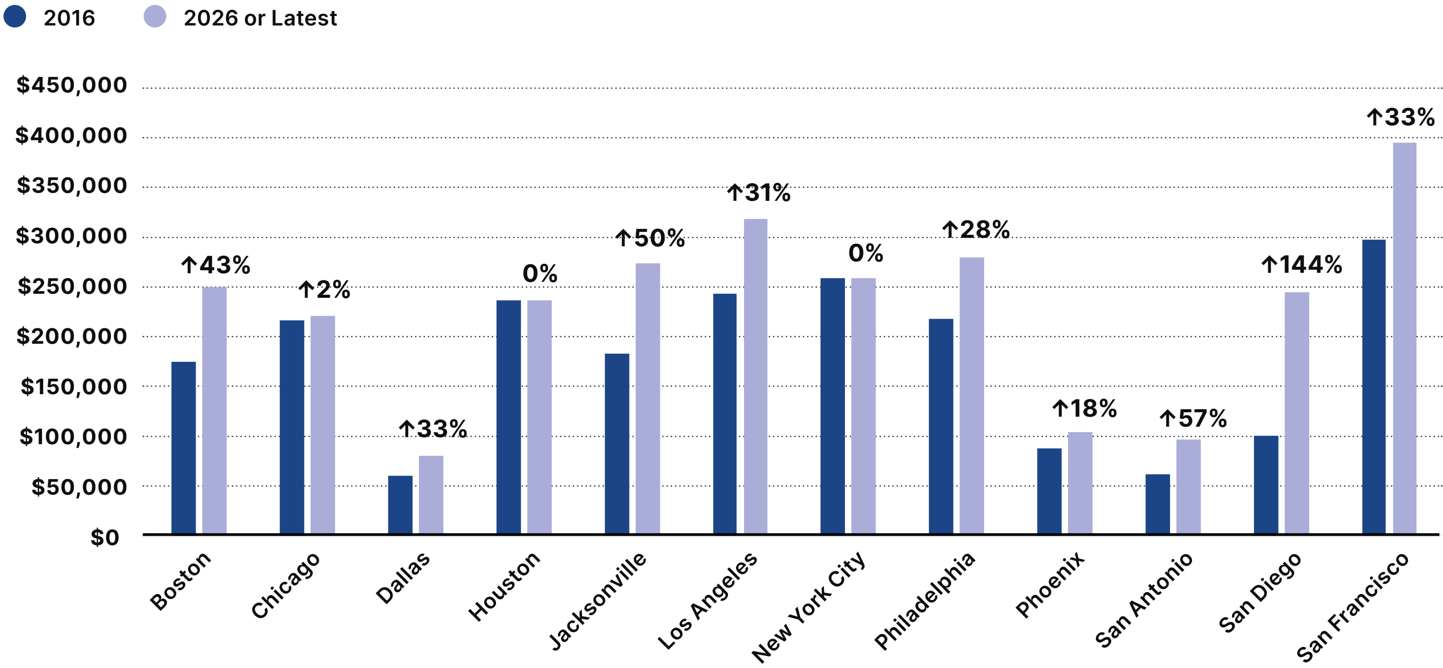
30 This also is true when adjusting for the cost of living. See Appendices: Regional Price Parities; US Cities for Comparison: Mayoral Salaries Adjusted for Cost of Living; US Cities for Comparison: City Council Salaries Adjusted for Cost of Living.

31 See Appendices: Latest Mayoral Salaries; Latest Council Member Salaries

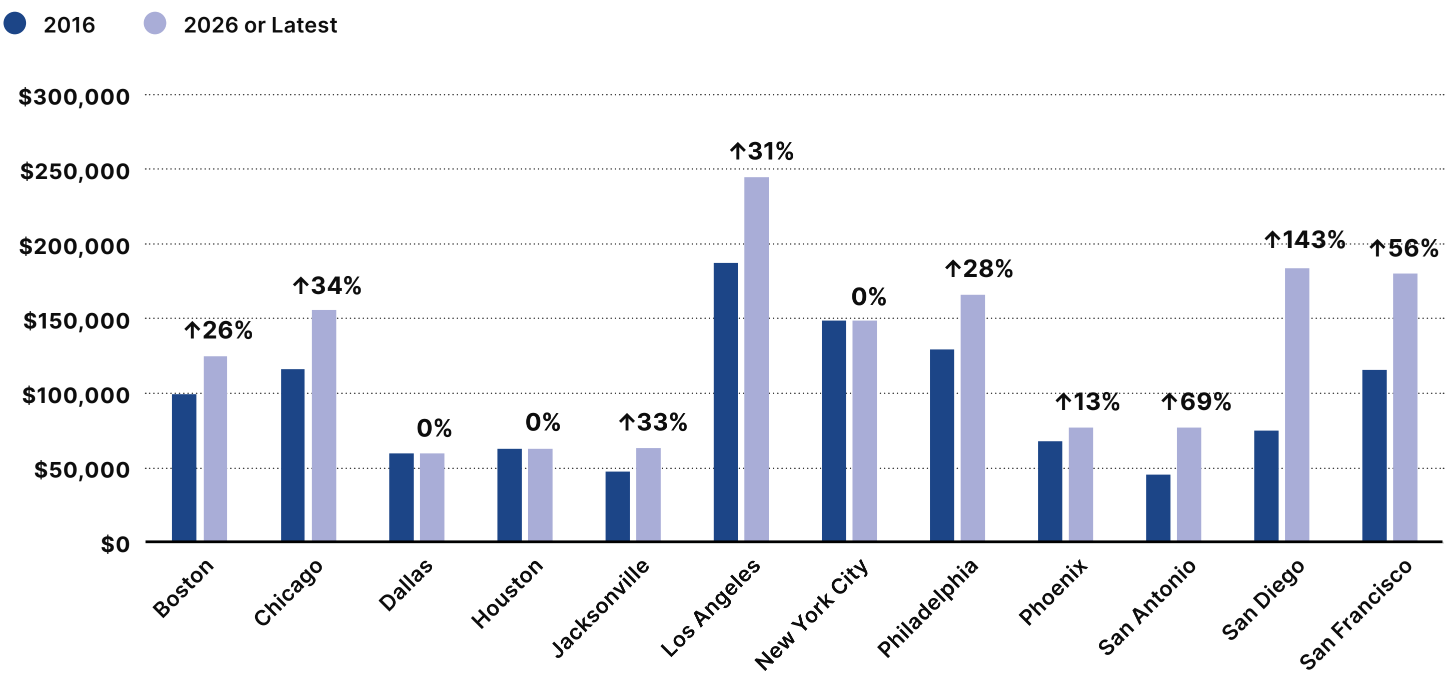
32 For District Attorney and Comptroller salaries in other cities, see Appendix, US Cities for Comparison: District Attorney and Comptroller Salaries Over Time.

US CITIES FOR COMPARISON: MAYORAL SALARIES 2016 TO 2025/2026

Mayor



City Council



SOURCES: Salary information was sourced from each city. See methodological approach for more information and a list of city-specific links.
NOTES: Dallas, Phoenix, and San Antonio operate with a Council-Manager form of government, in which a City Manager manages most or all of the city's day-to-day operations. Council Members in Houston, Jacksonville, and San Antonio are considered part-time.

Beyond salary benchmarks, the Commission also examined changes in median household income and how the income of elected officials compares to median household income in New York City. As noted previously, elected official salaries should reflect the responsibilities, duties, and sacrifices of their positions and be high enough to attract highly qualified leaders. Compensation should not be too far removed from the experiences and median household income of the people New York City's elected officials represent. But neither should it remain flat.

Since 2016, nominal median household income in New York City has grown by 38% from $58,856 to $81,228 in 2024. [33] Between 2022 and 2024, nominal median household income increased by 8%. When adjusted for inflation, real median household income across the city increased by 9% since 2016 but remained essentially flat in real terms between 2022 and 2024.[34] The mayor's salary as a multiple of median household income in New York City declined from 4.4 in 2016 to 3.2 in 2024. Council Members earned about 2.5 times the median household income in 2016; this declined to a multiple of 1.8 in 2024.

Finally, as directed by the Charter, the Commission also considered the issue of wage compression in the offices of New York City's elected officials. Wage compression in the public sector can occur when compensation ceilings undercut the ability of elected officials to recruit and retain higher quality staff (or those with specialized skills), whose salaries are capped by those of the officials.

Given the lack of a salary increase for the city's elected officials in 10 years, this is an issue to be monitored. However, wage compression does not seem to have unduly affected hiring in their offices. As of April 2026, in the Office of the Mayor, 17 staff earned more than the mayor. In the City Council, 106 staff earned more than City Council members. In the Office of the Comptroller, 35 staff earned more than the Comptroller. Across all other offices, 10 staff outearned the elected official.[35] But increasing salaries may help create more balance in the salary structure of various offices, where staff have benefited from salary increases over the past decade, while elected officials have not.

Specific Recommendations for Salary Increases

As required by the Charter, to reach its recommendations, the Commission was informed by a thorough analysis of elected officials' salaries in New York City over the past ten years, and the extent to which those salaries have lost purchasing power. We looked at how salaries compare to changes in overall inflation, housing costs, and childcare costs.

More broadly, the Commission considered how income for New Yorkers has changed since 2016, when the salaries of elected offices were last changed, and since 2022, the earliest year that the great majority of elected officials began their first full term in their current office.

The Commission also considered trends in New Yorkers' household income and private sector wages, as well as how elected officials' salaries compare with executives in other sectors and elected officials in New York State and in other U.S. cities.[36]

With all this in mind, we are recommending an 18.2% increase in the salaries of elected officials in New York City from their 2016 salaries, effective January 1, 2026, to restore or enhance the purchasing power of these salaries and ensure that they are sufficient for an elected official to support a household in New York City.

The table below shows the current salaries of elected officials set in 2016 and the proposed 2026 salary with the recommended 18.2% increase.

33 See Appendix, Median Household Income

34 Real median household income declined in the Bronx (-3%) and declined slightly in Staten Island.

35 See Appendices: Salaries of Staff in Elected Officials' Agencies; NYC Deputy Position Salaries

36 See Appendix, Elected Officials' Compensation Relative to Other Benchmarks

SALARY RECOMMENDATION

	Mayor	Public Advocate	Comptroller	Borough Presidents	City Council Members	City Council Speaker	District Attorneys*
Current Salary set in 2016	$258,750	$184,800	$209,050	$179,200	$148,500	$164,500	$212,800
Recommended Increase	18.20%	18.20%	18.20%	18.20%	18.20%	18.20%	18.20%
Recommended 2026 Salary	**$305,800**	**$218,400**	**$247,100**	**$211,800**	**$175,500**	**$194,400**	**$251,500**

*District Attorney salaries were set to $212,800 in 2016. Further adjustments were tied to NYS Supreme Court judges. Salaries increased to $232,600 in 2024 and $237,300 in 2026.

The proposed 18.2% increase reflects what it would take for salaries to keep pace with the growth in NYC-area inflation since 2021 and restore or enhance the purchasing power for the vast majority of elected officials based on the value of the salary they expected when they assumed their offices on or after 2022.

To estimate the increase needed to restore purchasing power, a cost-of-living increase was applied to salaries based on the year-over-year increase in annual average inflation for the New York City area each year for calendar years 2022 through 2025. Therefore, the 18.2% increase reflects four full years of change in the Consumer Price Index and is calculated by compounding the change each year.[37]

The Commission's proposal would keep the officials' real earnings and the related purchasing power of their salaries whole for as long as the longest-serving officials have held their current positions (based on their first full-term in office in their current positions), providing elected officials a fair salary in a city with a relatively high cost of living.

Inflation data from 2026 is not included in this calculation because it is not complete and some key inflation indicators, especially energy prices, are volatile due to the recent conflict in the Middle East.[38] By making the effective date of our proposal January 1, 2026, the next Commission will be able to analyze full-year 2026 data.

Under the Commission's proposal, New York's five District Attorneys would also receive a salary increase based on their salary in New York City Charter section 1125, which was set by Local Law 19 of 2016.[39] Unlike other elected officials in New York City, however, the District Attorneys receive more regular increases because their salaries are legally linked to those of state supreme court Justices. By law, each District Attorney must receive whichever is greater: their Charter section 1125 salary or the salary currently received by state supreme court Justices in their counties.[40]

In addition to specifically increasing elected official compensation in nominal terms, the recommended

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37 The adjustment was based on the lagged change in average annual inflation using the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers and all items in New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA) for the prior year. The change in CPI was calculated for each set of years: 2021-2022; 2022-2023; 2023-2024; and 2024-2025. See Appendix, Salary Recommendation.

38 New data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics confirm that inflation remains volatile in New York City, largely tied to energy prices. https://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.htm

39 https://intro.nyc/local-laws/2016-19

40 At present, the City Charter salary for District Attorneys is $212,800, but they actually earn $237,300, the salary of a state supreme court Justice. With an 18.2% increase, the DA's Charter 1125 salary will be $251,500. Since this is higher than the current $237,300 received by State Supreme Court Justices, they will receive a salary increase of 6%. They may also receive an additional increase when the New York State Commission on Legislative, Judicial, and Executive Compensation (also quadrennial) convenes in 2027. https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7878687&GUID=756B5628-176E-4AA2-BE5F-BDED7A7F2988

changes would have an impact on several other indicators.

For example, while the proposed 18.2% increase will not fully restore New York City's elected official salaries to their 2016 salary rankings among comparable cities, it would move NYC's mayoral salary from 5th to 3rd position, trailing only behind Los Angeles and San Francisco. The proposed increase would move City Council member's salaries from 6th to 4th position compared to 2016.[41]

It is worth noting that the cities that would remain ahead of New York in the rankings even after the increase (Los Angeles and San Francisco for the mayor, and those cities plus San Diego for City Council) each have built-in salary adjustment mechanisms, either through automatic annual cost-of-living increases or by tying compensation to judicial salaries, which are adjusted annually. More generally, cities which use automatic adjustment mechanisms have consistently higher mayoral and city council salaries.

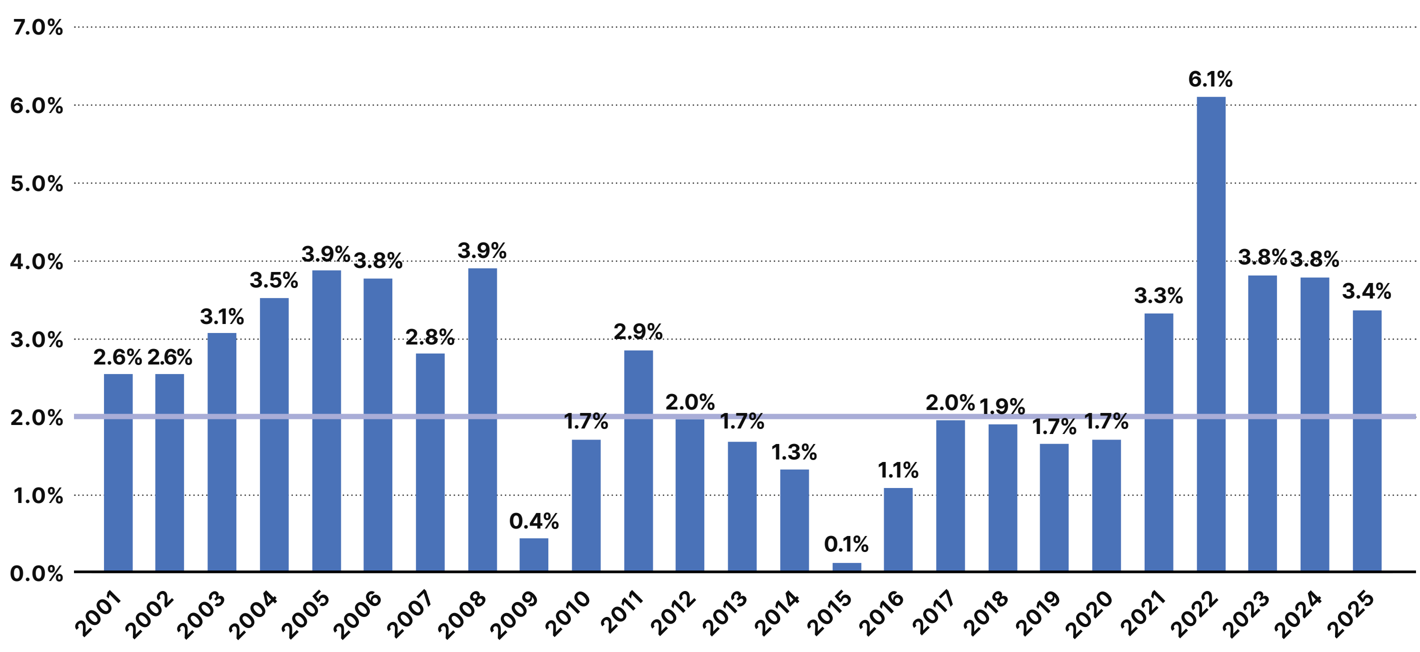
Conclusion

An 18.2% salary increase will restore the purchasing power elected official salaries have lost since 2021 and enhance the purchasing power of recently elected officials. But it is important to note that even with the proposed changes, the purchasing power of these salaries will likely erode in 2026 and beyond if inflation continues its inevitable march.

That is why we strongly recommend that the Quadrennial Commission be convened every four years without fail, as required by the Charter. It is also why we are recommending that the city establish an automatic inflation-tied increase of 2% per year or the actual inflation rate, whichever is lower, if the Commission is not convened in a timely manner. We are also proposing that the Mayor convene the next Quadrennial Advisory Commission at the beginning of 2028. These recommendations are addressed further in the next section.

The chart below shows year over year change in inflation since 2000.

CPI YEAR-OVER-YEAR PERCENT CHANGE, 2001 TO 2025



SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (CBSA)
NOTE: Data represents the year over year percent change in the average annual Consumer Price Index for the NY Metropolitan Area and is indexed to 100 at 2000. Data limitations: 2025 average is missing October due to appropriations lapse.

41 See Appendix, US Cities for Comparison: Nominal Mayor and;Council Member Salaries Ranked by Most Recent Salary

While we are mindful of the ongoing budget pressures the City faces, we believe that our recommendations are fiscally reasonable and grounded in sound public policy. Elected office should be fairly compensated and accessible to all qualified candidates, not only those with substantial wealth. Appropriate, inflation-tied compensation enables the City to attract and retain highly qualified leaders who embrace public service and who are not "in it for the money." Stagnant wages can deter talented individuals, especially younger people supporting households, from seeking and remaining in public office in New York City.

Enabling younger and more diverse individuals to enter public office is an important and worthwhile goal. But we need to make sure they can remain in public office by offering salaries that reflect the true cost of living in New York City. It is not unreasonable to expect that a City Council Member's salary is sufficient to support a household of four in New York City.

As noted, this is especially important now, as increased matching funds and ranked choice voting are attracting a broader field of candidates for public office and changing the demographics of elected office in New York City for the better.[42] According to City & State,[43] with each new City Council, the average age of Council Members has begun to skew younger, with the number of members under the age of 44 either increasing or staying the same while the number of members over the age of 45 has either stayed the same or decreased. Women and women of color have made the greatest gains.[44]

This is all to the good. Enabling younger and more diverse individuals to enter public office is an important and worthwhile goal. But we need to make sure they can remain in public office by offering salaries that reflect the true cost of living in New York City. It is not unreasonable to expect that a City Council Member's salary is sufficient to support a household of four in New York City.[45]

New York City's elected officials are public servants who represent the best interests of 8.5 million New Yorkers. They deserve to be fairly compensated, for their salaries to keep pace with inflation, and for the purchasing power of their salaries to be restored.

42 For example, New York City's 8:1 matching funds program (approved by ballot measure in 2018) have made it easier for less well-known and well-funded candidates to run for office. https://www.nyccfb.info/program/what-s-new-in-the-matching-funds-program/

43 https://www.cityandstateny.com/politics/2023/08/new-york-city-council-getting-younger-defying-national-trends/389890/

44 https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/small-donor-public-financing-plays-role-electing-most-diverse-new-york

45 The true cost of living for a household of two adults and two children in New York City was over $166,000 in 2022 according to a report from the New York City Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice. The current salary of $148,500 is below the true cost of living threshold. The recommend increase would raise council members' salaries to above the threshold ($175.500). For more details, see Appendix, True Cost of Living, New York City.

Looking Ahead: Policy Proposals & Recommendations

Looking Ahead: Policy Proposals & Recommendations

Several issues have been raised during the course of our deliberations. These include: the timing of adjustments in compensation for elected officials; whether certain conditions should be placed on the implementation of compensation modifications; and recommendations regarding the timing, certainty, and conduct of future Quadrennial Advisory Commissions. We have examined these issues in light of our remit, and we address each in turn below.

Timing of Compensation Adjustments

The Quadrennial Advisory Commission is mandated to review and, if warranted, recommend changes in elected officials' compensation. A related issue is when the recommended changes should take effect.

Public policy appropriately frowns on the prospect of elected officials increasing their own compensation. At the federal level, Congress is prohibited by the 27th Amendment to the United States Constitution from approving salary increases from taking effect until the next elected Congress takes office.[46]

In New York State, the recommended compensation of legislators and other executive and judicial employees is determined by the State Commission on Legislative, Judicial, and Executive Compensation. That Commission's recommendations regarding state salary adjustments only take effect in the following January, after the next November general election – in other words, with the new term for elected State officials.[47]

In New York City, section 27 of the Charter limits the City Council from adopting salary adjustments for Council Members and the Public Advocate between Election Day and the end of the year in years when the Council term is ending (which coincides with the elections of all elected officials in the City). A recent local law instructed this Commission to recommend salary adjustments retroactive to January 1, 2026, suggesting the Council could adopt and the Mayor sign a law adjusting their own salaries retroactively to the beginning of their current terms.[48]

We believe, and sound public policy supports, that compensation increases should be prospective for the elected officials who actually have to approve them. Further, we believe the City Council should follow something similar to the federal or state approaches with respect to designating the effective date for implementation.

With that said, we recognize that there has not been an increase in elected officials' compensation for more than a decade – a period in which the cost of living has risen significantly. Good government groups such as Citizens Union have proposed that, in view of these unusual (and hopefully not to be repeated) circumstances, a retroactive compensation increase would be appropriate on a one-time basis in 2026.

46 See US Const Amend XXVII Congress is also eligible for cost-of-living increases granted to others in the federal workforce, unless they vote to block the increase for themselves. See Boehner v. Anderson 30 F.3rd 156 (D.C. Cir 1994). In fact, Congress has blocked such cost-of-living increases for themselves for many years.

47 See L. 2015, Ch 60, Part E of the Laws of 2015, as amended regarding the New York State Commission on Legislative, Judicial, and Executive Compensation. NYS Constitution, Article III, § 6, (prohibiting changes to the salary received by members of the state legislature during their elected term).

48 Administrative Code of the City of New York § 3-601, as amended by Local Law No 81 (2026) of City of New York § 2.

Therefore, we propose that our compensation recommendations be made effective as of January 1, 2026, as suggested by Local Law 81.

This reflects both the long drought since the last compensation adjustment as well as the commission's decision not to take early 2026 cost of living increases into account in our calculations.

We also believe it is essential to adhere to a regular four-year cycle for the review of elected officials' compensation, as the name, "Quadrennial Commission" suggests. We discuss this recommendation below.

Conditions on Compensation Adjustments

The 2015 Commission conditioned its proposal for salary increases for Council Members on two recommendations: 1) Council Members becoming full-time employees, and 2) ending the Council's long-term practice of providing "lulus" – extra compensation at the discretion of the Speaker for chairing committees, subcommittees and the like, "in lieu of salary." We are pleased that the Council has embraced those conditions. We note, however, that although the Council has ended the practice of "lulus," in the Council rules, the City Charter still permits their use.[49] The Council should consider whether this is still appropriate or necessary.

Other proposed conditions

As noted in the Introduction, Reinvent Albany, supported by Citizens Union, testified that the Commission should condition our recommendations for salary increases on two new requirements: 1) making it easier for the public to access elected officials' public disclosure statements by publishing them in open data format, and 2) not requiring elected officials to be notified of requests or informed of the identities of those making these requests.

Reinvent Albany also submitted testimony that we should couple recommended increases in compensation with a ban on third-party travel payments. These payments, often made to subsidize travel to other countries, currently must be disclosed on financial disclosure statements. However, Reinvent Albany asserts that if the travel is truly in furtherance of an elected official's duties, the city should pay for it.

We believe that both of these proposals may well have merit, but they are more appropriately within the jurisdiction of the city's Conflict of Interest Board to address.

Recommendations Regarding Future Quadrennial Commissions

The law requires that the Mayor shall convene a Quadrennial Advisory Commission during the first 15 days of the effective date of LL 81 of 2026,[50] and then between January 1 and January 15, every four years thereafter. That means that the next Commission would be convened in January 2030.

For the reasons articulated by the 2015 Commission, supported by this Commission's research, and reiterated by good government groups in their testimony, we believe the Commission should be convened in the third year of a Council election cycle, rather than the first. The ultimate vote regarding election officials' compensation would then take effect at the beginning of the next elected City Council. In this way, the Council in session would not be voting on its own compensation.[51] As noted above, this recommendation is in line with the practice required at the federal level as well as the law regarding the compensation of New York State legislators and statewide elected officials.

49 New York City Charter § 26(b) ("In addition, any council member, while serving as a committee chairperson or other officer of the council, may also be paid, in addition to such salary, an allowance fixed by resolution, after a hearing, for the particular and additional services pertaining to the additional duties of such position.").

50 Between April 9, 2026 and April 23, 2026

51 Moreover, due to the effect of term limits, several members of the Council would be voting on future compensation for others, not themselves.

Therefore, we propose that the law be modified to require the appointment of the next Quadrennial Advisory Commission in January 2028 (and every four years thereafter), with whatever action the City Council takes to take effect on January 1, 2030 (and every four years thereafter).

We also agree with the 2015 Commission's recommendation that the period of time for the Quadrennial Commission to submit its recommendations is too short. The Commission is now required to submit its recommendations to the Mayor and the Speaker of the Council within 75 days of its appointment.[52]

As did the Commission in 2015, we relied on non-city resources to undertake the support, research, and analysis that are essential to our work. We have been exceptionally fortunate to have had outstanding help from the New York City Law Department in assuring we had the necessary means to obtain these outside resources,[53] including the expert analytical and research support we received from the Institute for State and Local Governance at the City University of New York.

Even so, completing our recommendations in a timely manner has been a feverish enterprise. Extending the time for future Commissions to complete their work would benefit the public and ensure ongoing thoughtful recommendations.

Therefore, we recommend that the time for future Commissions to complete their work should be extended from 75 days, under current law, to 120 days.

We believe it is unconscionable that only two Quadrennial Advisory Commissions prior to this one have been convened in this century despite the clear legislative intent that such a Commission should be convened every four years. New Yorkers need and deserve highly qualified elected officials who reflect the diversity that is so central to the unique tapestry of New York City.

The introduction of the City's campaign matching program, as well as the more recent adoption of ranked choice voting in primary and special elections, have been helpful in attracting a broader and more diverse pool of candidates. But if these candidates cannot afford to hold and — equally importantly, if elected, to stay in — public office, the city will be the worse for it. That is a compelling reason why quadrennial review to ensure that their compensation keeps pace with the cost of living is so critical.

A number of suggestions have been advanced to ensure that Commissions are convened in a timely fashion as the law requires. One suggestion is that the composition of the Commission should be appointed by elected officials in addition to the Mayor. Another approach would be to provide that if the Mayor does not convene a Commission in the time required by law, another elected official – perhaps the Comptroller – be empowered to do so. Both of these approaches would likely require approval of the electorate, either as a referendum or a proposal by a Charter Revision Commission.

In any event, we believe the power to convene the Commission and appoint its members should continue to reside with the Mayor as the leader of the executive branch of the government. The Mayor is, in the first instance, responsible for the management of the city's finances. Moreover, if our proposal for convening these Commissions in the third year of a Mayor's term (as well as the third year of all the other city elected officials, other than the District Attorneys) is adopted, keeping responsibility for the Commission in the purview of the Mayor is likely to reduce political infighting as an election year approaches.

However, in view of the dismal record of convening Commissions over the past quarter century, we believe that there should be some protection to ensure that the real value of elected official salaries does not stagnate if a Commission is not convened as required by law.

52 LL 81 of 2026

53 We also appreciate the support we received from the New York City Department of City Planning in providing the Planning Commission's hearing room and logistical support for our Public Hearing.

Therefore, we propose that the law be modified to provide for a 2% annual increase or the actual increase in the cost of living, whichever is less, in all elected official salaries for each year that a Quadrennial Advisory Commission is not convened.

That would provide an incentive for future Mayors to follow the law — and provide modest salary protection to elected officials if they do not.[54]

Finally, we agree with Citizens Union and others that the City Council should provide reasons in writing whenever it modifies or does not accept the recommendations of this and future Commissions.

54 Other cities such as Chicago and Philadelphia utilize an automatic, inflation-tied cost of living adjustment for elected officials. We are only recommending a modified version of that approach as a backstop if the Mayor does not convene a Commission in a timely manner.

Acknowledgments

Acknowledgments

We extend our sincere gratitude to the individuals and organizations whose support made the Commission's work possible.

First, thank you to our three colleagues who played an instrumental role in supporting the Commission throughout this process: Michael Hyman, Staff Director; Olivia Glen-Rayner, Project Manager; and Jordan Tamagni, Editorial Director.

Michael supported the Commission from its earliest stages and was indispensable to the development of this final report. Drawing on decades of experience at the NYC Department of Finance, he provided thoughtful guidance, historical perspective, and invaluable expertise that strengthened both our deliberations and our recommendations.

Olivia ensured that the Commission's work remained organized, coordinated, and on schedule. She managed the logistics of our public hearing, developed and maintained the Commission's website, coordinated with external partners, and contributed insights throughout the Commission's deliberative process.

Jordan transformed countless hours of discussion, analysis, and notes into a concise, compelling, and well-crafted report that reflects the Commission's work with clarity and precision.

We also extend our appreciation to our research team at the CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance (ISLG), led by Stephanie Rosoff and supported by Annie Chen, Cecilia Low-Weiner, and Lisa McMonagle. Working under a demanding timeline, ISLG conducted extensive research across New York City and peer cities nationwide and delivered analysis that was essential to informing the Commission's recommendations.

Thank you to Lixia Guo for leading the graphic design of this report and helping translate the Commission's findings into a polished, accessible, and engaging final publication.

Thank you to HR&A for generously hosting our deliberation meetings and to Jenn Sanchez, particularly, who helped coordinate complex schedules.

Finally, we are grateful to the New York City agencies that supported this effort. We thank the Law Department for providing critical legal and policy information to the Commission; the Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI) for ensuring all technological needs were met; and the Department of City Planning for hosting and facilitating our public hearing both in person and via Zoom.

The Commission's work benefited greatly from the time, expertise, and dedication of all who contributed to this effort.

The 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission Biographies

The 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission Biographies

Carl Weisbrod, Chair

Carl Weisbrod has led numerous public initiatives focused on revitalizing New York City neighborhoods. Beginning in the 1970s, he led the successful New York State and New York City efforts to revitalize Times Square. From 1990 to 1994, he served as the founding president of the New York City Economic Development Corporation. From 2014 to 2017, he was Chair of the New York City Planning Commission and Director of the Department of City Planning.

He is currently a Senior Advisor at HR&A Advisors. He has served as a Director of the Trust for Governors Island since 2012 and as a Trustee of New York Public Radio since 2017. His past roles include Trustee of the Ford Foundation and the Urban Land Institute, and Chair of the New York State Health Foundation. Weisbrod holds degrees from Cornell University and New York University School of Law.

Dr. Lilliam Barrios–Paoli, Commissioner

Dr. Lilliam Barrios-Paoli has held senior leadership roles in New York City government and the nonprofit sector for decades. She chaired the board of New York City Health + Hospitals and served as Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services. Her work in City government includes serving as Commissioner of the Department for the Aging, Department of Employment, Department of Personnel (now DCAS), Department of Housing Preservation and Development, and the Human Resources Administration.

In the nonprofit sector, she was President and CEO of Safe Space NYC and Senior Vice President and Chief Executive for Agency Services at the United Way of New York City, where she was instrumental in establishing the September 11th Fund. She also served as Executive Director of Lincoln Hospital in the South Bronx. Dr. Barrios-Paoli holds a degree from Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City as well as a Master’s degree and a Ph.D. from the New School for Social Research.

Dr. Larian Angelo, Commissioner

Dr. Larian Angelo is an economist with nearly 30 years of public service experience. She served in the New York City Office of Management and Budget under two administrations, including as Deputy Director for Education and Intergovernmental Relations under Mayor Bloomberg and as First Deputy Director under Mayor de Blasio. She also worked for the New York City Council as Chief Economist under Speaker Peter Vallone and later as Finance Director for Speaker Gifford Miller.

Angelo served as Vice President at CUNY’s Guttman Community College and as a Senior Fellow at the CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance. She has taught public finance at the Milano School of Public Policy and has served on multiple public bodies, including the Mayor’s Charter Revision Commission, the New York City Audit Committee, the COVID-19 Fiscal Impact Task Force for Suffolk County and the New York City Panel for Education Policy.

Earlier in her career, Larian was research director for the United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers of America. She holds a Ph.D. from the New School for Social Research.

Appendices

Written Testimony

Testimony to the NYC Quadrennial Advisory Commission

With More Pay Comes More Accountability for NYC Government Officials

Commission Should Recommend Ban on Third-Party Travel Payments

May 21, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the compensation of New York City elected officials, and the Quadrennial Advisory Commission ("the Commission") process.

Reinvent Albany supports pay for government leaders that reflects the importance of their decisions on the everyday lives of New Yorkers and encourages high-quality candidates to seek public office.

However, if New York City's government leaders expect more pay, they should expect more accountability – especially in the wake of the massive corruption scandals that recently rocked City Hall.

Reinvent Albany urges the Commission to couple any proposed salary increase with these three reasonable actions:

1. **Banning third-party travel payments** (See our full datasheet of travel payments reported by elected officials from 2020-2024.)
2. **Easier public access to financial disclosure statements**
3. **Quadrennial commission appointment and process reforms**

Before getting into the details of these proposals, we want to note how important it is that the Quadrennial Commission is underway, and that the Mayor and Council agreed not to act to raise salaries without independent review. The Quadrennial Commission is an important safeguard against unreasonable, politicized pay raises and should be welcomed by government leaders for helping to legitimize regular, deserved salary increases. (We and our colleagues noted this in our December 16, 2025 letter.)

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Reinvent Albany Recommendations to the Quadrennial Commission

Ban Third-Party Travel Payments

We strongly believe that the risk of corruption is too great to continue to exempt travel payments from the city's gift ban. Allowing travel payments to be "gifted" to officials contributes to the public's perception that officials can be easily influenced by special interest groups. The solution is simple: if it is truly related to one's official public duties to attend a conference or visit a location, it should be paid for with taxpayer dollars.

Section 12-110 of the Administrative Code and Conflicts of Interest Board (COIB) rule 1-01(h) together are intended to curb corruption and conflict of interests. They recognize that third-party travel payments are a form of outside enrichment and require elected officials to report any payments over $1,000 on their financial disclosure statements. This disclosure requirement is important, because it confirms that NYC government recognizes that third party travel benefits are a thing of value that public officials are getting because of the office they hold.

Because of this, we believe that eliminating third party travel reimbursements are within the purview of the Quadrennial Commission's recommendations. The central role of third party travel benefits in the massive scandals of the Adams administration underlines their potential for abuse, as does the continued public scrutiny over those paid to other elected officials.

We note that COIB is reviewing its regulations regarding gifts to the city, and recently re-opened the public comment process (see our comments to COIB).

To better understand the scope of these payments, Reinvent Albany collated travel payments reported by NYC elected officials on their financial disclosure statements. We found *at least* $186,525 worth of travel reimbursements from outside parties from 2020-2024 (2025 is not yet publicly available). This is a conservative estimate because we used exact amounts when reported, or the minimum if only a range was provided.

The total value of travel payments reported by officials has increased steadily since 2020 and 2021, when travel was limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic (data from before 2020 is not published on the COIB website, so it is not included in our analysis). In 2024, there were at least $77,025 worth of travel payments, as shown below.

Minimum Value of Travel Payments Gifted to NYC Elected Official Financial, 2020-2024

Includes either minimum value of range or exact amount, when provided.

Year ▲	Total Reported
2020	$3,000
2021	$1,000
2022	$66,000
2023	$39,600
2024	$77,025

Table: Reinvent Albany • Source: Summary of COIB Financial Disclosure Statements • Created with Datawrapper

A full list of the organizations providing travel payments is provided at the end of this testimony. Reinvent Albany takes no position on the particular policy or political issues discussed or raised by these outside organizations during these trips. We do, however, question whether it is good public policy for city travel to be funded by outside groups. If the trip is truly related to the official duties of elected officials, we see no reason why they should not be paid for by taxpayers – and subject to the same transparency and public scrutiny as they are now.

Make Financial Disclosure Statements More Usable by the Public

When the City Council raised NYC elected official salaries in 2016, it recognized that improvements were needed to the transparency of financial disclosure statements, and passed legislation requiring that they be published online for elected officials.

Reinvent Albany believes there is more work to do to increase transparency of these disclosures, which can identify potential conflicts of interest and outside business dealings. We recommend the following:

1. **Publish financial disclosure statements in an open data format,** allowing easier comparison and study by the public and Conflicts of Interest Board staff.
2. **Publish more disclosure statements online, including all senior public officials** like commissioners, deputy mayors, and other board and commission members appointed by the Mayor.
3. **No longer require notification to filers of requests for financial disclosure statements.** The State does *not* require the identity of a person

requesting a financial disclosure to be disclosed to the government official, nor should New York City. At the state level, it is simply submitted as a FOIL request.

Increase the Independence and Transparency of the Quadrennial Commission

As recommended in our written testimony to the City Council from December 16, 2025, we support a quadrennial commission that is more independent, with:

- Two appointments from the Mayor;
- One from the Public Advocate;
- One from the Comptroller;
- One from the Speaker of the City Council; and
- The chair should be selected by the commission, not the Mayor.

We also support changes proposed by the 2015 Quadrennial Commission's report, including:

- Increasing the time allotted to the Commission to produce a report beyond the 75 days after appointment that is currently required;
- Codifying requirements for public hearings and transparency of Commission operations, including publishing materials, reports, etc.;
- Requiring elected officials to respond to requests for information by the Commission.

Additionally, given the experience of the 2015 Quadrennial Commission process where the City Council gave itself a larger increase than recommended by the Commission, we believe that the City Council should be required to provide a written explanation regarding any changes it makes to the Commission's recommendations prior to any hearing held on proposed legislation to implement the salary increase.

Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please email Rachael Fauss, Senior Policy Advisor, at rachael@reinventalbany.org.

Appendix: Travel Payments Made by Organizations to NYC Elected Officials

Minimum Value of Travel Payments Gifted by Organization, 2020-2024

Includes either minimum value of range or exact amount, when provided.

Organization Name ▲	Total Reported
America-Israel Friendship League (AIFL)	$1,000
Association of Prosecuting Attorneys	$1,000
Attorneys General Alliance	$5,000
Climate Jobs Institute at Cornell University ILR School	$20,000
Combat Antisemitism Movement	$1,000
Community Leaders of America	$4,000
Concordia	$1,000
Consulate General of the Dominican Republic	$1,000
Council For American Ireland Relations	$7,000
Delta Air Lines	$1,000
European Janusz Korczak Academy	$7,000
Fair and Just Prosecution Organization	$2,325
Fondazione Fratelli Tutti	$1,000
Government of Colombia	$1,000
Jewish Community Relations Council	$98,600
Korean Prosecutor's Bar Association	$1,000
LGBT Victory Institute Conference	$1,000
Local Progress (a project of the Center for Popular Democracy)	$18,000
Mobius Conference	$1,000
Municipality of Bat Yam, Israel	$1,000
New Deal Leaders	$2,000
North Capital Forum	$1,000
Northwestern University	$2,000
Queens Economic Development Corporation	$1,700
RFK Human Rights	$3,000
The Blue Card	$1,000
UJA-Federation of New York	$1,000
Uzbekistan Mission at the U.N.	$1,000

Table: Reinvent Albany • Source: Summary of Conflicts of Interest Board Financial Disclosure Statements • Created with Datawrapper

CITIZENS UNION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
Written Testimony to the 2026 New York City Quadrennial Advisory Commission
Public Hearing - 120 Broadway
May 21, 2026

Dear Commissioners Carl Weisbrod, Lillian Barrios-Paoli, and Richard Angelo:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Ben Weinberg, and I am the Director of Public Policy at Citizens Union, a nonpartisan good government group working for honest and accountable government and open and fair elections for nearly 130 years.

We have provided testimony and input to many previous pay commissions at both the city and state level, and several of our reform recommendations — including ending outside income, lulus, and part-time positions — were adopted through prior compensation review processes.

We also advocated for this specific commission to be formed after council members sought to bypass the commission process late last year, and we are pleased that the integrity of the compensation review process has been preserved. We therefore ask that you approach this responsibility with the independence, thoughtfulness, and transparency it deserves.

This testimony responds to several of your guiding questions and offers additional recommendations.

A summary of our recommendations:

1. Elected officials' salaries should be increased to reflect cost-of-living growth and attract strong candidates, promote integrity, and enable people from all backgrounds to serve.
2. Salary adjustments should occur in 2026 as a one-time exception to the preferable prospective pay increase.
3. Another citywide elected official should be allowed to appoint a Quadrennial Advisory Commission if the mayor fails to do so.
4. Commission cycle should be restored to the third year of a four-year term.
5. Commission timeline should be restored to 120 days.
6. Commission’s public hearing mandate and transparency measures should be codified.
7. The Council should explain departures from the Commission's pay recommendations.
8. Elected officials’ financial disclosure statements should be in an open-data format.

Should elected officials' salaries be increased?

Yes. Given the increase in the cost of living in New York over the past decade, as well as salary adjustments for city government employees, we believe the salaries of elected officials in New York should be increased.

Citizens Union's longstanding position is that elected officials should be well compensated. Competitive salaries attract strong candidates, enable individuals who are not independently wealthy to pursue public service, reduce incentives for corruption, and reflect the importance of public service. New salary levels should reflect those goals.

Have the roles of any NYC elected officials changed significantly since the 2015 Commission?

We do not believe they have. The authority and powers of elected officials under the City Charter and state law have not substantially changed over the past decade, and only modest adjustments to appointment powers for boards and commissions have been enacted.

Last year, voters approved several charter amendments that shifted some authority over land use decisions from council members to city agencies — including the City Planning Commission and the Board of Standards and Appeals — as well as to borough presidents. It is not yet clear how these changes will affect council members' responsibilities in practice, though a future pay commission may wish to examine the issue further. Borough presidents' offices already maintain substantial staff capacity dedicated to land use matters.

Some quantitative changes have occurred. An individual council member now represents more people than they did ten years ago and therefore receives more constituent requests. The modern news cycle requires more frequent and immediate public engagement across multiple communications platforms. The Council introduces more bills with every term. However, none of these developments constitute a qualitative change in the role itself, and many could be addressed through additional staffing support, which may be done legislatively or through the budget process.

Although the roles themselves have not fundamentally changed, the cost of living in New York has risen substantially since 2015. We therefore recommend that the Commission benchmark new salary levels against CPI growth and comparable compensation for other elected officials and senior positions in the public and private sector.

On what date should proposed changes in compensation levels take effect?

Citizens Union has long supported making salary adjustments prospective so that elected officials cannot immediately benefit from pay increases they approve themselves. The U.S. and New York Constitutions generally require legislative salary increases to take effect in the next term, after an election, so voters can hold officials accountable for those decisions. The City Charter addresses a similar concern by prohibiting salary increases during the lame-duck period after an election.

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To strengthen this principle, the Council moved the commission process to the third year of the term in 2016 (LL 22/2016) to “make it more likely” that any recommendations would take effect in the following term, after an election.

The current circumstances are unusual, however. The last two commissions — in 2020 and 2024 — were never appointed by the mayor, producing a decade-long freeze. Of the 64 incumbent elected officials who would be affected by a salary adjustment, five were first elected before 2020 and an additional 40 were first elected before 2024. Those officials entered office without ever seeing a compensation review during their tenure, a fundamentally different situation from the normal prospectivity concern, where officials raise their own pay mid-term. Given this context, we support a one-time increase taking effect in 2026.

We do, however, oppose a recent change in the law that shifted the commission cycle from the third year of a term to the first year (LL 81/2026). While that change was enacted to address the immediate problem — the ten-year salary freeze — those temporary circumstances should not have been permanently codified. Shifting the cycle to the first year undermines the principle that compensation decisions should be prospective and considered well in advance. It also creates a significant practical and political risk: a newly inaugurated mayor may lack the time, capacity, or political incentive to appoint a commission within 15 days of taking office, as would be required in January 2030. The law should be amended to restore the prior cycle.

Should there be modifications or conditions to future compensation review processes?

Yes, any legislation increasing compensation should also include reforms to strengthen the review process itself.

Provide another citywide elected official with backstop appointment authority

Mayors have repeatedly ignored the mandate to appoint a compensation commission every four years — including Mayor Bloomberg in 2003 and 2011, Mayor de Blasio in 2020, and Mayor Adams in 2024. In fact, over the past quarter century, elected officials’ salaries have been reviewed and increased only twice. If this pattern continues, council members will eventually bypass the advisory process altogether and raise their own salaries.

There is currently no enforcement mechanism if the mayor refuses to comply, short of litigation — an unlikely remedy given the politics involved. The Council should therefore amend the Administrative Code to authorize another citywide elected official, such as the City Comptroller, to appoint a Quadrennial Advisory Commission if the mayor fails to do so by January 15 of the required year under Administrative Code § 3-601(a).

Without reforming the commission appointment mechanism, there is no guarantee future mayors will comply with the current law. Advancing this legislation now, while the issue is under active consideration, is more feasible politically than waiting until another mayor again declines to act.

Restore the prior commission cycle and review period.

The commission cycle should revert to the third year of the term, instead of the new first-year cycle, for the reasons stated above. That means the next Quadrennial Advisory Commission would be established in January 2028. Even if that commission ultimately recommends no or only modest adjustments, given the short time passed from the upcoming adjustment, restoring a predictable review process would itself benefit the city.

The review period should also be restored to 120 days. LL 81/2026 reduced the window to 75 days, despite the 2015 Commission's recommendation that it be extended to allow adequate time for analysis, public feedback, and deliberation.

Codify transparency requirements.

Transparency measures should be written into the Administrative Code: the commission should be required to hold public hearings (current law provides only that it "may" do so) and to publicly release the underlying data, materials, and testimony it relies upon.

Should other conditions be recommended for new compensation levels?

Yes. We support two recommendations advanced by Reinvent Albany in their testimony.

First, the City Council should be required to provide a written explanation for any changes it makes to the Commission's recommendations before holding hearings on implementing legislation. This requirement would create a meaningful record of the Council's reasoning and deter self-interested departures from the Commission's independent judgment.

Second, elected officials' financial disclosure statements should be published in an open-data format. Structured, machine-readable disclosure data would substantially improve public accountability by enabling journalists, researchers, and watchdog groups to analyze conflicts of interest at scale — rather than reviewing individual PDF filings.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. We appreciate the Commission's work on this important issue and would be happy to provide any additional information or clarification that may be helpful to your deliberations.

Recent writings and advocacy on elected officials' compensation from Citizens Union:

- January 2026: Citizens Union Commends City Council for Advancing Compensation Review Through Independent Commission, Says Bill Leaves Mayoral Appointment Loophole Unresolved
- January 2026: Testimony in Support of Council Legislation Establishing a One-time Compensation Commission
- December 2025: Watchdog Groups Oppose Rushed Council Pay Hike: Electeds Should Receive Fair Raise Through Outside Review Process
- December 2025: Testimony to the City Council: Legislation to Increase Compensation Levels for New York City Elected Officials
- December 2025: Explainer: How to Increase Elected Officials' Salaries in New York City

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BLACK, LATINO AND ASIAN CAUCUS (BLAC)

May 21, 2026

Written Testimony of Council Member Phil Wong To the Quadrennial Advisory Commission for the Review of Compensation Levels of Elected Officials

Thank you to the members of the Commission for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding compensation for elected officials in New York City.

I respectfully urge the Commission not to recommend any salary increase for members of the New York City Council at this time.

Recent reports have referenced a proposed increase to approximately $172,500 annually for Council Members, roughly a 16 percent increase over the current base salary of $148,500. At a time when many New Yorkers are struggling with affordability, rising costs, and economic uncertainty, I do not believe any increase is appropriate.

New York City also continues to face serious fiscal challenges, including projected outyear budget gaps exceeding $7 billion and reaching nearly $10 billion in future years. The city's own financial documents acknowledge ongoing structural budget concerns and note that lower-income households continue falling behind inflation.

Public perception matters. Many working families have not seen raises anywhere close to what is being discussed for elected officials. Residents are facing rising rents, grocery bills, utility costs, childcare expenses, and property taxes while increasingly questioning whether government is living within its means.

While I understand the arguments regarding inflation and the growing demands of public office, timing and fiscal reality must also be considered. Public service should not be viewed primarily through the lens of personal compensation, particularly during periods of financial strain for the taxpayers we represent.

Historically, proposals to raise elected officials' salaries during fiscally difficult times have often faced strong public opposition for these same reasons. During the fiscal crisis of the 1970s, similar proposals were withdrawn amid concerns about public trust and government priorities.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Commission not to recommend a salary increase for elected officials at this time.

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May 22, 2026

Testimony of Council Member Kamillah M. Hanks Before the 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission

Dear Chair Weisbrod, Commissioner Angelo, Commissioner Barrios-Paoli,

My name is Kamillah M. Hanks, and I am proud to serve as Majority Whip of the New York City Council and represent the 49th Council District on the North Shore of Staten Island.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I come before this Commission with a deep respect for the seriousness of this process and with a clear understanding that any conversation about compensation for public officials must be handled with transparency, humility, and accountability to the people we serve.

For nearly ten years, there has been no formal review of compensation for New York City's elected officials. During that same period, the cost of living in our city has continued to rise. Housing, transportation, groceries, childcare, and the basic costs of maintaining a life in New York have all placed greater pressure on working people across this city. Public servants are not separate from that reality. We live in the same city, raise families in the same neighborhoods, and face the same economic pressures as the people we represent.

This conversation should not be about excess. It should be about fairness, stability, and preserving the ability of everyday New Yorkers to serve. When compensation remains frozen for almost a decade while the cost of living rises around it, the value of that compensation is not standing still. It is going backward.

Serving in the City Council is a full-time responsibility by every measure. The work does not end when the hearing ends or when City Hall closes. It follows us into our evenings, weekends, emergencies, and communities.

That level of responsibility should remain accessible to people from every background. If we want a government that truly reflects New York City, then public service cannot become something only available to those with independent wealth, outside support, or the financial flexibility to absorb years of rising costs.

I also want to be clear that this process must remain grounded in the public interest. Any recommendation from this Commission should be based on data, inflation, economic reality, and the long-term health of our democratic institutions. New Yorkers deserve a process that is open, responsible, and honest about both the work required of public office and the financial realities of living in this city.

Fair compensation is not about making public service comfortable. It is about making sure public service remains possible. It is about ensuring that talented, committed, community-rooted people can step forward, run for office, serve honorably, and continue doing the work without being pushed out by economic barriers.

I respectfully urge this Commission to consider the impact of nearly a decade without review, the rising cost of living in New York City, and the importance of keeping public service open to all New Yorkers. Our democracy is strongest when the people making decisions reflect the people affected by them.

Thank you for your time, your work, and your thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kamillah M. Hanks
Majority Whip, New York City
49th District, Staten Island

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New York City Council Member Selvena N. Brooks-Powers' Testimony to the Quadrennial Advisory Commission

Submitted: May 22, 2026

Thank you to the Quadrennial Advisory Commission for the opportunity to testify.

As New York City continues to center affordability in our public discourse, we must be honest and inclusive about who that conversation applies to. That includes elected officials.

The last compensation review for city elected officials took place in 2015. Since then, the cost of living in New York City has risen dramatically, while the scope, pace, and demands of public service have evolved just as significantly.

Today, Council Members are expected to be accessible to constituents not only during traditional business hours, but in the evenings, on weekends, and in moments of crisis. The rise of social media, digital platforms, and an accelerated news cycle has fundamentally transformed this role. New Yorkers rightly expect real-time communication, rapid response, and consistent visibility from their elected representatives in ways that simply did not exist a decade ago.

At the same time, the responsibilities of Council Members have expanded in both scale and complexity. We manage multi-million-dollar discretionary budgets, navigate intricate land use decisions, oversee policy that impacts millions, and serve as one of the most immediate and responsive forms of government for our constituents.

We are often the first call in an emergency and the last line of accountability when systems fail. Yet while the expectations have increased, compensation has remained stagnant.

As a body, the Council has consistently advocated for fair wages, cost-of-living adjustments, and expanded benefits for the hardworking public servants who keep this city running. Just this week, we advanced Home Rule messages to support retirement security and benefit enhancements for our workforce.

We recognize that fair compensation is not a luxury; it is a necessity to recruit, retain, and sustain a talented and diverse workforce.

That same principle applies here.

Ensuring that elected office is fairly compensated is not about personal gain; it is about preserving access to public service. Without reasonable compensation, we risk limiting these roles to those who can independently afford to serve, undermining the very diversity, equity, and representation that our democracy depends on.

Public office should be accessible to working- and middle-class New Yorkers: to parents, to caregivers, to those who understand firsthand the challenges facing our communities.

A thoughtful, reasonable adjustment to compensation helps ensure that serving in government remains financially viable, ethically grounded, and reflective of the people we represent.

I urge the Commission to consider not only the economic realities of today, but the long-term health and inclusivity of our democratic institutions.

Thank you again for your time, your service, and your thoughtful consideration.

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May 21st, 2026

Testimony before the 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission for the Review of Compensation Levels of Elected Officials

Good afternoon, Chair Weisbrod, Commissioner Angelo, Commissioner Barrios-Paoli, My name is Dr. Nantasha M. Williams. I represent the 27th Council District in Queens, and I am proud to serve as Deputy Speaker of the New York City Council.

I am pleased to testify before this Commission today, a body established through Local Law 81 of 2026, legislation I was proud to sponsor. Earlier this year, that law was enacted to require the Mayor to convene this Quadrennial Advisory Commission and conduct a transparent, structured review of compensation levels for New York City's elected officials. I sponsored this legislation because I believe deeply that the process for reviewing elected official compensation should be open, transparent, and grounded in the public interest.

A Decade of Inaction

The last full review of elected official compensation in New York City took place in 2016. In the years since, elected officials have received no cost-of-living adjustments, even as the cost of living in New York City has risen dramatically. Despite the Charter's intent for periodic review, this Commission was not convened for nearly a decade, leaving the process dormant during a period of significant economic change.

This is not a matter of privilege; it is a matter of public policy. When compensation fails to keep pace with inflation and the real cost of living in one of the most expensive cities in the world, we risk narrowing who can realistically afford to serve in public office.

I also recognize that discussions regarding elected official compensation can generate understandable public scrutiny, particularly at a time when many New Yorkers are facing economic pressures themselves. That is precisely why this process must remain transparent, data-driven, and grounded in **long-term institutional l**ong-term institutional **stability and public accountability** long-term institutional rather than politics.

Framing This as What It Is: A Cost-of-Living Adjustment

I want to be clear about how I believe the Commission should frame any recommendation it makes: this is a cost-of-living adjustment, not a raise. There is an important distinction. A raise implies compensation above and beyond what was previously contemplated. A cost-of-living adjustment simply ensures that compensation retains its real value over time, consistent with how inflation and economic conditions have evolved. Across city government, annual or recurring cost-of-living and wage adjustments are a standard part of maintaining competitive and sustainable compensation. In recent years, many municipal employees received annual increases in the range of approximately 3 percent per year through collective bargaining agreements. During that same period, elected officials received no adjustments at all.

The principle underlying COLA adjustments is widely recognized across the public sector and should inform this Commission's review as well. Inflation-adjusted analysis demonstrates that compensation for elected officials has lost substantial real value since the last review in 2016. I urge this Commission to examine the cumulative impact of inflation and make a recommendation grounded in principles of fairness, equity, and economic reality.

Ensuring Public Service Remains Accessible

The responsibilities of a City Council Member constitute a full-time public service role by any reasonable standard. We write and pass legislation, oversee agencies, represent hundreds of thousands of constituents, respond to emergencies and constituent crises, and work to make every neighborhood in this city safe, stable, and livable. The restrictions placed on outside income for elected officials are significant and appropriate, but they also mean that compensation must be sufficient on its own to allow people from all walks of life to serve.

If we want the Council to reflect the diversity of New York City, including working families, immigrants, teachers, nurses, small business owners, and first-generation New Yorkers, then the compensation structure must make that possible. When compensation stagnates while costs rise, we narrow the pipeline of who can realistically run for office and serve.

Conclusion

I commend this Commission for its work and for the seriousness with which you are approaching this review. I urge you to recommend a cost-of-living adjustment that accounts for the extended period without review since 2016, reflects the current economic realities of New York City, and ensures that public service remains accessible to all New Yorkers, not just those who can afford it.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Nantasha M. Williams
Deputy Speaker, New York City Council
Council Member, 27th District

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May 21, 2026

2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission Public Hearing for the Review of Compensation Levels of Elected Officials

Good afternoon.

Before I begin, I would like to thank the members of this Commission: Chair Weisbrod, Commissioner Angelo, and Commissioner Barrios-Paoli for convening this public hearing and considering testimony regarding the compensation levels of elected officials across the City of New York. Through this timely proceeding, New York possesses a unique opportunity to evaluate cost-of-living wages in a manner that will serve New Yorkers well. I look forward to the insights this Commission will bring to these critical wage calculations, and to your work ahead as you review this important data for our community.

I am Council Member Amanda Farías. For the past 4.5 years, I have had the honor of representing New York City Council District 18 in the Bronx; a working-class constituency comprising working families, municipal workers, small business owners, immigrants, and facing escalating financial pressures. To maintain a truly representative government, public service must remain financially sustainable for working-class citizens. When compensation fails to keep pace with escalating costs, New Yorkers are systemically precluded from leadership, leaving public office exclusive to the wealthy.

The last comprehensive review of compensation for New York City elected officials occurred in 2016. In the decade since, New York City, our nation, and the global economy have endured extraordinary economic volatility that has fundamentally altered the baseline cost of living and working in this city. **We have navigated a global pandemic that devastated local economies and reshaped the demands placed upon public servants. We continue to experience historic inflation, soaring housing costs, rising healthcare expenses, childcare burdens, supply chain instability, and workforce shortages.** The economic realities facing New Yorkers today are fundamentally different than they were ten years ago.

At the same time, the role of elected officials has expanded dramatically in both scope and intensity.

Serving as a member of the New York City Council is not a standard 40-hour workweek. It is a continuous, around-the-clock responsibility that requires managing crises, responding to emergencies, overseeing agencies, negotiating budgets, conducting legislative work, supporting constituents through bureaucratic systems, and maintaining a constant presence within the communities we represent. During certain periods of the year — including budget season, emergencies, and times of crisis — **many of us work 60, 70, or even 80-hour weeks**. The demands of the role do not stop after business hours, on weekends, or during holidays.

Yet despite the scale of these responsibilities, elected officials have not received the same routine cost-of-living considerations that many other city workers have received over time. We are public servants, too. We dedicate our professional lives to serving New Yorkers, and our compensation should reflect the modern realities of public service in one of the most expensive cities in the world.

Importantly, today's City Council is increasingly reflective of the communities we represent. Many members are first-generation professionals, working-class New Yorkers, caregivers, parents, immigrants, or individuals without generational wealth or financial safety nets. We carry student debt, support extended family members, manage childcare and eldercare responsibilities, and face the same economic pressures confronting millions of New Yorkers every day.

Public office should not become accessible only to independently wealthy individuals or those with outside financial privilege. If compensation does not keep pace with the realities of living and working in New York City, we risk creating a government that is less representative, less accessible, and less connected to the lived experiences of everyday New Yorkers.

Additionally, there are substantial professional and personal costs associated with public service that are often overlooked. Elected officials routinely absorb expenses tied to community engagement, transportation, events, meals, constituent support, district visibility, and the day-to-day operational realities of maintaining a meaningful presence in our communities. Many of these costs are not reimbursed, despite being directly tied to the responsibilities of the role.

Providing fair and livable compensation is not about personal enrichment; it is about protecting the integrity, accessibility, and sustainability of public service. It is about ensuring that people from all socioeconomic backgrounds can realistically serve their city without financial instability becoming a barrier to participation, as we are seeing with mass exodus from other levels of government.

As we look toward the future of New York City governance, we must also recognize the importance of rebuilding and strengthening public trust in our institutions. That requires transparency, accountability, and a government that attracts and retains talented, ethical, community-rooted leaders. A realistic compensation framework is one component of ensuring public service remains stable, professional, and accessible to working-class New Yorkers - not just those with independent wealth or financial flexibility.

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New York City’s elected officials are tasked with navigating some of the most complex urban challenges in the country while serving millions of residents through moments of crisis, uncertainty, and need. The compensation structure should reflect both the magnitude of this responsibility and the economic realities of the city we serve.

Our government requires the perspectives of transit workers, healthcare professionals, municipal employees, educators, small business owners, immigrant families, and single parents managing multiple jobs to maintain housing and food security. These New Yorkers deserve representation from individuals who understand economic hardship as a lived reality rather than a theoretical talking point. If compensation structures fail to evolve alongside inflation, we risk creating an exclusionary system where only the independently wealthy can afford to serve. That outcome is inherently incompatible with a representative democracy.

My hope is that we can look at this situation through the same human lens we apply to the rest of our city's workforce. Every year, our municipal employees secure regular wage updates because we all understand that soaring costs hurt working families. While these adjustments are a vital lifeline, they are often barely enough to help workers offset the immense weight of modern inflation.

But when the global pandemic struck, the official process to implement cost-of-living adjustments was halted. This crisis froze our statutory review timeline during a time when local offices had to transform overnight into operational hubs for food distribution, healthcare access, and localized economic relief. **As a result, we are now effectively one-and-a-half review cycles overdue while governing in an entirely different economic backdrop.**

As this Commission formulates its recommendations, I trust that these comprehensive socioeconomic realities will be fully reflected in your final analysis, and a consideration for retroactive compensation in this session as initially considered in the City Council's legislation. Accounting for these broader systemic shifts is essential to protecting the integrity of our roles. By keeping public service economically viable for individuals from every socioeconomic background, we ensure that New York City’s government remains deeply reflective of the working people who sustain it. Thank you for your time, your rigorous consideration, and the opportunity to submit this testimony for the record. I welcome any questions the commission may have.

Respectfully Submitted,

Hon. Amanda Farías
Council Member, District 18
New York City Council

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New York City Council
Quadrennial Advisory Commission on Elected Official Compensation
Public Hearing — May 2026

Good morning, Chair and distinguished members of the Quadrennial Advisory Commission. My name is Rita Joseph, and I represent the 40th Council District in Brooklyn. I am grateful for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of a long-overdue cost-of-living adjustment to the compensation of New York City Council Members.

A Decade of Inaction Has Real Consequences

It has been nearly a decade since this Commission last conducted a formal review of Council Member compensation. Since 2016, New York City — and the nation — has experienced significant inflation, a global pandemic, and a dramatic increase in the cost of living. During that same period, Council Members have received no cost-of-living adjustments whatsoever. The result is that the real value of our compensation has steadily eroded, year after year, without correction.

To be clear: this is not a request for a raise. This is a request to restore the purchasing power that has quietly been stripped away by inflation over the past ten years. Every other professional class in public service has seen periodic adjustments to keep pace with economic realities. Council Members have not. That imbalance must be addressed.

Public Service Must Remain Accessible

One of the most serious — and least discussed — consequences of stagnant compensation is what it means for who can realistically serve on this body. The New York City Council is meant to reflect the full diversity of our city: working families, educators, community organizers, immigrants, and people who have never thought of government as a career but answered the call to serve their neighbors.

When compensation fails to keep pace with the cost of living in one of the most expensive cities in the world, we effectively price out the very people we need most in these seats. We risk creating a Council that can only be sustained by those with outside income, personal wealth, or financial support — and that is not the Council New York City deserves.

Fair compensation is not a privilege. It is a prerequisite for an equitable and representative democracy.

Transparency and Public Accountability Must Guide This Process

I want to be clear about what I am asking this Commission to do. I am asking for recommendations that are data-driven, grounded in economic evidence, and anchored in the long-term institutional health of city government. Any adjustments recommended should be tied explicitly to objective measures — inflation indices, cost-of-living data, and comparisons with peer municipalities and other elected bodies.

This process must be transparent. New Yorkers deserve to understand how and why compensation decisions are made on behalf of their elected officials. A rigorous, well-documented process is not only the right approach — it is the only approach that will withstand public scrutiny and maintain the trust this institution depends on.

Conclusion

I respectfully urge this Commission to act on the evidence before you. A cost-of-living adjustment that reflects the economic realities of the past decade is fair, justified, and necessary. It will help ensure that public service in New York City remains accessible, that our Council remains diverse, and that our institution remains strong for the generations who will serve after us.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your commitment to getting this right.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita Joseph
Council Member, 40th District
New York City Council

May 31, 2026

Dear 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission,

My testimony focuses on advocating for a reasonable increase in the cost of living for New York City's elected officials given the significant inflationary pressures we've faced over the last decade.

When the 2015 Quadrennial Advisory Commission convened, it was understood that periodic reviews would occur every four years. Now, as we enter the tenth year since this ruling was enacted, the cost of living in one of the world's most expensive cities has become increasingly unsustainable.

I want to be clear that my testimony is not motivated by personal financial gain, but by what I believe is sound public policy. This issue is about retaining New Yorkers—particularly working- and middle-class residents whose contributions to our economy and tax base help fund the services, programs, and investments that benefit all New Yorkers. A strong and stable tax base enables the City Council to continue supporting essential services, especially for our most financially vulnerable residents. Policies that help people stay, work, and invest in New York are ultimately investments in the city's long-term fiscal health and shared prosperity.

Since the last review, living costs have surged by **35.9%**. To put this into perspective:

- Rent that was once **$1,600** per month in 2016 has skyrocketed to nearly **$2,200**.
- A weekly grocery bill that used to be **$100** in 2016 has climbed to **$135**.
- The cost of an unlimited subway pass has increased from **$116.50** to **$136**.

The impact of these changes is significant. I want to express my gratitude to the commission for your diligent efforts during this process and strongly encourage you to consider this cost of living increase.

Respectfully,

Councilmember Shanel Thomas-Henry

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

May 29, 2026

Dear Chair Weisbrod, Commissioner Angelo, Commissioner Barrios-Paoli,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

I have long supported legislation advocating for the increase of compensation for elected officials, and I strongly urge the commission to recommend a meaningful increase of compensation for council members. The cost of waiting has already become too high.

The cost of living has skyrocketed since the last compensation review occurred in 2015. The cost of living for NYC is 27% higher than the national average. A Council Member's current salary is barely keeping up with the city they're meant to serve, as net pay can barely cover more than a month's rent. When dedicated public servants are forced to worry about making rent or supporting a family on a salary frozen in time, that load does not stay neatly compartmentalized. It bleeds into the work and frays focus. The role of Public Service should not be gridlocked for only those with independent wealth, family support, or a willingness to take on significant financial strain. It filters out exactly the kind of diverse, working and middle-class voices our government desperately needs. Fair pay is about ensuring that the door to public service remains open to every qualified New Yorker.

Sincerely,

Council Member Julie Won
26th District, New York City Council

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THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
LYNN SCHULMAN
COUNCIL MEMBER, 29TH DISTRICT, QUEENS

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May 29, 2023

Testimony of Council Member Lynn Schulman to the 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission for the Review of Compensation Levels of Elected Officials

Dear Commission Members:

I represent the 29th Council District in Queens, and I am proud to serve as Chair of the New York City Council Health Committee.

I am writing in support of increasing the compensation for city elected officials, in particular, the New York City Council. The last full review of elected official compensation in New York City took place in 2016. In the years since, elected officials have received no cost-of-living adjustments, even as the cost of living in New York City has risen dramatically. In addition, as Council Members, we have costs associated with the position that are not reimbursable by the City Council, including transportation to community events, tickets to community and citywide events, and the like, all of which come out of our personal pockets. Further, many of us work 7 days a week and are on call for emergencies 24 hours a day.

Despite the Charter's intent for periodic review, this Commission was not convened for nearly a decade, leaving the process dormant during a period of significant economic change. This is not a matter of privilege; it is a matter of public policy. When compensation fails to keep pace with inflation and the real cost of living in one of the most expensive cities in the world, we risk narrowing who can realistically afford to serve in public office. While discussions regarding elected official compensation can generate understandable public scrutiny, particularly at a time when many New Yorkers are facing economic pressures themselves, it is important to compensate elected officials so that we can fulfill our responsibilities without compromise.

We also need to keep in mind that with the new ranked choice voting process implemented in 2021, there are now more women, LGBTQ+ and other marginalized communities being elected to office – these communities historically have faced low wages in the workplace. In addition, in the City Council, there are several new mothers who face additional economic hardships when presented with salaries that can barely keep them afloat.

From my perspective, this is a cost-of-living adjustment, not a raise. There is an important distinction. A raise implies compensation above and beyond what was previously contemplated. A cost-of-living adjustment simply ensures that compensation retains its real value over time, consistent with how inflation and economic conditions have evolved. Across city government, annual or recurring cost-of-living and wage adjustments are a standard part of maintaining competitive and sustainable compensation. In recent years, many municipal employees received annual increases in the range of approximately 3 percent per year through collective bargaining agreements. During that same period, elected officials received no adjustments at all. The principle underlying COLA adjustments is widely recognized across the public sector and should inform this Commission's review as well. Inflation-adjusted analysis demonstrates that compensation for elected officials has lost substantial real value since the last review in 2016.

To put this request in perspective, the salary of New York City Council Members is much lower than their peers in other major cities (smaller than NYC), including Los Angeles, CA, where the base annual salary for Council Members is $244,000; San Francisco, CA, where the Bd of Supervisors annual salary is $175,370 and Washington, DC where salaries range from $154,000 to $171,000, depending on seniority and other factors.

This brings up another issue which I believe is important for the Commission to consider. In 2016, when the salaries for New York City Council Members was increased, there were several give-backs that actually resulted in the salary being comparatively lower – 1) Committee Chairs could no longer get stipends and 2) and the ability of Council Members to receive outside compensation was severely restricted. This has had the result of deterring potential candidates from running for office, which is something we want to encourage, not discourage.

I urge this Commission to examine the cumulative impact of inflation and make a recommendation grounded in principles of fairness, equity, and economic reality.

The responsibilities of a City Council Member constitute a full-time public service role by any reasonable standard. We write and pass legislation, oversee agencies, represent hundreds of thousands of constituents, respond to emergencies and constituent crises, and work to make every neighborhood in this city safe, stable, and livable. The restrictions placed on outside income for elected officials are significant and appropriate, but they also mean that compensation must be sufficient on its own to allow people from all walks of life to serve. If we want the Council to reflect the diversity of New York City, including working families, immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, teachers, nurses, small business owners, and first-generation New Yorkers, then the compensation structure must make that possible.

As a further issue to take into consideration, last year Council employees formed a union and staff now receive periodic increases based on the contract that was negotiated. In some instances, though rare, staff get paid higher salaries than Council Members. Getting a fair increase for the elected officials would help address that imbalance.

In closing, the current stagnated salary structure narrows the pipeline of who can realistically run for office and serve.

I commend this Commission for its work and for the seriousness with which you are approaching this review. I urge you to recommend a cost-of-living adjustment that accounts for the extended period without review since 2016, reflects the current economic realities of New York City, and ensures that public service remains accessible to all New Yorkers, not just those who can afford it.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn C. Schulman

New York City Council Member, 29th District

May 29, 2026

Carl Weisbrod, Chair
Dr. Larian Angelo, Commissioner
Dr. Lilliam Barrios-Paoli, Commissioner
New York City Quadrennial Advisory Commission
c/o CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance
10 East 34th Street, 5th Floor
New York, New York 10016

Dear Chair Weisbrod, Commissioners Angelo and Barrios-Paoli:

We write as the elected District Attorneys of New York City to advise the Commission on the setting of compensation for New York City's elected officials. We want to thank the Commission for their ongoing participation as part of this process, and for their work on behalf of our city's public servants.

Given the rise in the cost of living in New York over the past decade, as well as salary adjustments for city government employees, we join with good government advocacy groups and other colleagues in government to urge that salaries of elected officials be increased. We encourage the Commission to develop a similar analysis to the one used during the issuance of the Commission's past reports. To determine those recommendations for our city's five elected District Attorneys, the Commission provided a cost-of-living analysis as well as a comparative look of how the salaries for New York City's elected prosecutors compared to other elected prosecutors in similarly sized jurisdictions across the nation. We think this is a fair and reasonable approach to set statutorily defined salary adjustments.

When an agency head's salary stagnates, it can have the effect of depressing compensation throughout the entire organization. While we understand public sector legal salaries will never rise to the level of our private sector counterparts, we are all recruiting from the same pool of talent, and as that gap widens our retention and recruiting challenges grow. That artificial ceiling directly affects the thousands of line prosecutors and professional staff who carry out this work every day while facing rising housing, transportation, childcare, food, and student debt costs.

Prosecutors do not choose public service for the money; they choose it to serve their communities. And they have done this important work to keep our city safe while embracing the most sweeping changes in criminal practice in decades, which have included state law changes that have dramatically expanded prosecutors' review and disclosure obligations. But stagnant pay affects who can afford to enter public service and who can afford to stay. Talented prosecutors increasingly leave our offices because they can no longer absorb the financial sacrifice required to remain in one of the most expensive cities in the world.

When experienced prosecutors leave, institutional knowledge disappears, younger attorneys lose mentors, and complex prosecutions become harder to staff and supervise. Financial pressure also threatens the diversity of our offices. Public service should not be a privilege reserved for those with independent financial safety nets; our offices must be staffed by talented professionals from every community and economic background. Fair compensation is necessary to sustain the experienced and diverse workforce New York City needs to deliver justice and protect public safety.

We thank you for your consideration and ask the Commission to conduct a full and fair analysis of elected official compensation, mindful of the increasing volume and complexity of the work, the erosion in real compensation, and the critical public safety progress New York City's prosecutors are committed to continuing.

Respectfully submitted,

Darcel D. Clark
Bronx County District Attorney

Eric Gonzalez
Kings County District Attorney

Michael McMahon
Richmond County District Attorney

Melinda Katz
Queens County District Attorney

Alvin L. Bragg, Jr.
New York County District Attorney

Legal Provisions and Related Documents

LOCAL LAWS
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
FOR THE YEAR 2026

No. 81

Introduced by Council Members Williams, Louis, Hanif, Won, Epstein, Schulman, Ung, Hankerson, Lee, Banks, J. Sanchez, Encarnación, Abreu, P. Sanchez, Thomas-Henry, Marte, Brooks-Powers and Salaam.

A LOCAL LAW

To amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to establishing a commission to review the salaries of elected officials in New York City and make recommendations regarding those salaries

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Section 3-601 of the administrative code of the city of New York, as amended by local law number 22 for the year 2016, is amended to read as follows:

a. [Between] *Within 15 days of the effective date of the local law for the year 2026 that amended this section and between* the first and fifteenth day of January, [2020, and during the same period] every fourth *calendar* year thereafter, the mayor shall appoint three persons for the review of compensation levels of elected officials. The members of the commission shall be private citizens generally recognized for their knowledge and experience in management and compensation matters. The mayor shall appoint one of the members to be chairperson of the commission.

b. The commission shall study the compensation levels for the mayor, the public advocate, the comptroller, the borough presidents, the council members and the district attorneys of the five counties within the city and shall recommend changes in those compensation levels, if warranted.

In making its recommendations the commission shall take into consideration the duties and responsibilities of each position, the current salary of the position and the length of time since the last change, any change in the cost of living, compression of salary levels for other officers and employees of the city, and salaries and salary trends for positions with analogous duties and responsibilities both within government and in the private sector.

c. The commission shall submit a report to the mayor *and speaker of the council* not later than [one hundred twenty] *75* days following its appointment containing its recommendations for changes in compensation levels for any elected position set forth in subdivision b or its recommendation that no changes are warranted. *The mayor may, in the mayor's discretion, submit a recommendation to the speaker of the council for the approval, disapproval, or modification of any recommended compensation changes contained within the report.*

d. [The mayor shall submit the report of the commission along with his or her recommendation for approval, disapproval or modification to the council not later than thirty days after receipt of the report of the commission.

e.] The council in its discretion shall consider the recommendations of the commission, and any of the mayor *if so provided,* for changes in the compensation levels of any such elected position, if any, and approve a local law changing the compensation of the mayor, the public advocate, the comptroller, the borough presidents, the council members, and the district attorneys of the five counties within the city.

[f.] *e.* The members of the commission shall serve without compensation except that each member shall be allowed his or her actual and necessary expenses, to be audited in the same manner as other city charges.

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[g.] *f.* The commission may hire or contract for necessary staff and technical assistance and may require city agencies to provide such assistance.

[h.] *g.* The commission shall have a budget as provided for by the mayor.

[i.] *h.* The commission may hold public hearings and may consult with compensation experts from the public and private sectors.

§ 2. The commission convened in the year 2026 pursuant to this local law shall make recommendations on what the compensation levels for the mayor, public advocate, comptroller, borough presidents, council members, and district attorneys for the 5 counties within the city should be as of January 1, 2026.

§ 3. This local law takes effect immediately.

THE CITY OF NEW YORK, OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK, s.s.:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a local law of The City of New York, passed by the Council on March 10, 2026 and returned unsigned by the Mayor on April 10, 2026.

MICHAEL M. McSWEENEY, City Clerk, Clerk of the Council.

CERTIFICATION OF CORPORATION COUNSEL

I hereby certify that the form of the enclosed local law (Local Law No. 81 of 2026, Council Int. No. 502-B of 2026) to be filed with the Secretary of State contains the correct text of the local law passed by the New York City Council, presented to the Mayor, and neither approved nor disapproved within thirty days thereafter.

BRENDA COOKE, Acting Corporation Counsel.

Chapter 6: Advisory Commission for the Review of Compensation Levels of Elected Officials

Editor's note: For related unconsolidated provisions, see Appendix A at L.L. 1986/077.

§ 3-601 Quadrennial advisory commission for the review of compensation levels of elected officials.

a. Within 15 days of the effective date of the local law for the year 2026 that amended this section and between the first and fifteenth day of January, every fourth calendar year thereafter, the mayor shall appoint three persons for the review of compensation levels of elected officials. The members of the commission shall be private citizens generally recognized for their knowledge and experience in management and compensation matters. The mayor shall appoint one of the members to be chairperson of the commission.

b. The commission shall study the compensation levels for the mayor, the public advocate, the comptroller, the borough presidents, the council members and the district attorneys of the five counties within the city and shall recommend changes in those compensation levels, if warranted. In making its recommendations the commission shall take into consideration the duties and responsibilities of each position, the current salary of the position and the length of time since the last change, any change in the cost of living, compression of salary levels for other officers and employees of the city, and salaries and salary trends for positions with analogous duties and responsibilities both within government and in the private sector.

c. The commission shall submit a report to the mayor and speaker of the council not later than 75 days following its appointment containing its recommendations for changes in compensation levels for any elected position set forth in subdivision b or its recommendation that no changes are warranted. The mayor may, in the mayor's discretion, submit a recommendation to the speaker of the council for the approval, disapproval, or modification of any recommended compensation changes contained within the report.

d. The council in its discretion shall consider the recommendations of the commission, and any of the mayor if so provided, for changes in the compensation levels of any such elected position, if any, and approve a local law changing the compensation of the mayor, the public advocate, the comptroller, the borough presidents, the council members, and the district attorneys of the five counties within the city.

e. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation except that each member shall be allowed his or her actual and necessary expenses, to be audited in the same manner as other city charges.

f. The commission may hire or contract for necessary staff and technical assistance and may require city agencies to provide such assistance.

g. The commission shall have a budget as provided for by the mayor.

h. The commission may hold public hearings and may consult with compensation experts from the public and private sectors.

(Am. L.L. 2016/022, 2/19/2016, eff. 2/19/2016; Am. L.L. 2026/081, 4/9/2026, eff. 4/9/2026)

Editor's note: For related unconsolidated provisions, see Appendix A at L.L. 1986/077, L.L. 2016/022 and L.L. 2026/081.

Changes in the Responsibilities of NYC Elected Official Since 2015

Reviewed by the NYC Law Department

Appointments

Since the Quadrennial Commission's 2015 report, amendments to the New York City Charter and Administrative Code charged the Mayor with the establishment of numerous offices, committees, and other entities and the duty to appoint directors and members to such offices, committees, and other entities.[1] The Borough Presidents, Comptroller, Public Advocate, and Speaker of the Council must now also appoint members to various committees and boards.[2]

Mayor - Reporting

The Mayor must now submit various reports and follow guidelines to increase transparency and accessibility.[3]

Public Advocate and Borough Presidents – Budget

In accordance with amendments to the charter in 2019 and beginning in Fiscal Year 2021, minimum budgets must be set for the Public Advocate and Borough Presidents.[4] Using each office's current Fiscal Year 2020 budget as a baseline, these budgets must be adjusted each fiscal year by the lesser of the percentage change in the City's total expense budget (excluding certain components such as pension contributions) or the rate of inflation in the New York City metropolitan area, unless the Mayor makes a written determination that a lower budget is fiscally necessary in a given year.[5]

Borough Presidents

In addition to management of a budget, Borough Presidents must make applications to become a community board member[6] and relevant by-laws[7] available online. Relating to the new expedited land use review procedure, Borough Presidents must submit a recommendation or a waiver for

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[1] *See generally* NYCC §§ 8-20-u; Administrative Code §§ 3-101

[2] *E.g.* NYCC §§ 197-g, 440, 3100, 3201, 3401.

[3] *E.g.* NYCC §§ 11-a, 12(a), 16, 206.

[4] NYCC §§ 24(o), 82(18).

[5] *Id.*

[6] NYCC § 82(17).

[7] NYCC § 85(b)(3-a).

applications relating to certain land use proposals relevant to their borough.[8] Borough Presidents must also consult with relevant borough commissioners of environmental protection.[9] In an elimination of responsibilities, Borough Presidents no longer administer the city maps for each borough; instead, DCP administers a single city map.[10]

District Attorneys (pursuant to Article 18 of the New York County Law)

The District Attorney must pay monies and proceeds from the sale of property realized as a consequence of any forfeiture and report such sale to the relevant authority.[11] Moreover, for instances in which the attorney general appoints a district attorney to act as special district attorney in place of the attorney general, the special district attorney may direct their staff to assist such special duties and may be compensated by the department of budget for such work.[12]

Council

Council now has power of advice and consent for the appointment by the mayor of corporation counsel.[13]

Anti-Sexual Harassment Training

Heads of all agencies, including the offices of the borough presidents, the comptroller and the public advocate, must ensure employees therein receive anti-sexual harassment interactive training annually.[14]

Citywide Participatory Budgeting

The Mayor must establish a program to promote citywide participatory budgeting in coordination with Council and the Borough Presidents.[15]

[8] NYCC § 197-e.

[9] NYCC § 1405.

[10] NYCC § 198.

[11] NY County Law § 700(2).

[12] NY County Law § 701(6).

[13] NYCC § 31.

[14] NYCC § 815.1.

[15] NYCC § 225-a.

List of new offices, committees, and other entities requiring appointment (pursuant to the NYC Charter)

- Office of information privacy. (L.L. 2017/245, L.L. 2022/027, NYCC 8(h))
    - City's Chief Privacy Officer, who will lead such office, appointed by mayor.
- Identifying information protection committee. (L.L. 2017/245, Admin s. 23-1204)
    - Chair of such committee appointed by mayor.
- Municipal division of transitional services. (L.L. 2016/103, NYCC. 13-c)
    - Coordinator of such division appointed by mayor.
- Office of crime victim services. (L.L. 162/2016, L.L. 38/2019, NYCC 13-d)
    - Coordinator of such division appointed by mayor.
- Office of street vendor enforcement. (L.L. 18/2021, L.L. 117/2024, L.L. 54/2026, NYCC 13-e)
    - Head of such office appointed by mayor.
- Office for neighborhood safety and the prevention of gun violence. (L.L. 29/2022, L.L. 37/2023, NYCC 13-f)
    - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
- Office to combat domestic violence, established by the mayor and the director thereof appointed by the mayor, is changed to the office to end domestic and gender-based violence, and the scope of its work is expanded. (L.L. 38/2019, L.L. 49/2022, NYCC 19)
- Office of urban agriculture. (L.L. 123/2021, NYCC 20-a(b))
    - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
    - Urban agriculture advisory board to advise director of office of urban agriculture, mayor, and council. (L.L. 123/2021, NYCC 20-a(d))
        - Mayor appoints 7 members to such board.
        - Speaker of the Council appoints 6 members to such board.
- Commission on gender equity. (L.L. 67/2016; L.L. 45/2020; NYCC 20-c)

- 26 members appointed by mayor.
- 1 chair of such commission appointed by mayor.
- 5 members appointed by the speaker of the council.

- Drug strategy advisory council. (L.L. 48/2017; L.L. 129/2018; NYCC 20-c)
  - Mayor designates an agency or office to prepare a drug strategy and report, and such agency designates representatives to join such council.
  - Council includes the Speaker of the Council and three members appointed by the speaker.
- Office of nightlife. (L.L. 178/2017, L.L. 103/2018, L.L. 220/2019, L.L. 80/2020, L.L. 152/2023, NYCC 20-d)
  - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
  - Nightlife advisory board.
    - Mayor appoints 5 members.
    - Speaker of council appoints 9 members.
- Committee on city healthcare services. (L.L. 6/2018, NYCC 20-e)
  - Mayor appoints 5 members.
  - Speaker of council appoints 5 members.
- Office of data analytics. (L.L. 222/2018, NYCC 20-f)
  - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
- Office for the prevention of hate crimes. (L.L. 46/2019, L.L. 47/2019, L.L. 49/2020, NYCC 20-g)
  - Coordinator of such office is appointed by mayor.
- Office of food policy. (L.L. 41/2020, L.L. 40/2020, NYCC 20-i)
  - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
- Office of cyber command. (L.L. 89/2020, NYCC 20-j)
  - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
- Center for older workforce development. (L.L. 123/2020, NYCC 20-k)

    - Director of such center appointed by mayor.
- Office of sports, wellness and recreation. (L.L. 62/2021, NYCC 20-l)
    - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
    - Advisory board for such office composed of members including:
        - 1 member appointed by Public Advocate.
        - 1 member appointed by Comptroller.
        - 1 member appointed by each Borough President.
        - 5 members appointed by Mayor.
        - 5 members appointed by Speaker of the Council.
- Office of community mental health. (L.L. 155/2021, NYCC 20-m)
    - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
    - Mental health council appointed by such director.
- Office of the utility advocate. (L.L. 80/2022, NYCC 20-n)
    - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
- Office of not-for-profit organization services. (L.L. 164/2021, L.L. 46/2023, NYCC 20-o)
    - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
- Office of marine debris disposal and vessel surrendering. (L.L. 46/2023, NYCC 20-p)
    - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
- Office of healthcare accountability. (L.L. 78/2023, NYCC 20-q)
    - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
- Mayor must designate an agency or office to provide centralized support to residents displaced by qualifying events. (L.L. 109/2025, NYCC 20-r)
- Office for coordination of the transition to borough-based jails. (L.L. 140/2025, NYCC 20-s)
    - Coordinator of such office appointed by mayor.
    - Interagency working group to advisor mayor includes:

        - Such coordinator of such office;
        - The Speaker of the Council;
        - and directors of other agencies or offices.

- Office of contract services. (L.L. 175/2025, NYCC 20-t)
    - Director of such office appointed by mayor, who will also be the city chief procurement officer.
- Office of the census (for a temporary basis). (L.L. 9/2026, NYCC 20-t*2)
    - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
- Office of algorithmic accountability. (L.L. 188/2025, L.L. 193/2025, NYCC 20-u)
    - Director of such office appointed by mayor.
- Affordable housing appeals board. (L.L. 177/2025, NYCC 197-g)
    - Members thereof include:
        - The mayor;
        - The Speaker of the Council;
        - and the relevant Borough President.
- Department of veterans' services. (L.L. 113/2015, eff. 4/8/2015, NYCC 3100)
    - Commissioner of such department appointed by mayor.
    - Veterans advisory board with 13 members includes:
        - 7 members appointed by Mayor;
        - 6 members appointed by Speaker of the Council
- Civic engagement commission, composed of members including (L.L. 211/2018, NYCC 3200, 3201):
    - 8 members appointed by Mayor
    - 2 members appointed by Speaker of Council;
    - 1 member appointed by each Borough President.
- Office of ethnic and community media. (L.L. 83/2021, NYCC 3300)

- Director of such office appointed by mayor.

- Office of racial equity. (L.L. 121/2022, NYCC 3401)
  - Chief equity officer, who leads such office, appointed by mayor.

- Commission on racial equity, composed of 15 members including (L.L. 121/2022, NYCC 3404):
  - 7 members appointed by Mayor;
  - 5 members appointed by Speaker of Council;
  - 1 member appointed by Public Advocate;
  - 1 member appointed by Comptroller.

- Office of community hiring and workforce development. (NY Laws ch. 669 of 2023)
  - Director of such office appointed by Mayor.

- Civilian Complaint Review Board (already existing). (2019 referendum, NYCC 440)
  - Now, Mayor and Speaker of the Council jointly appoint one member to such board, and Public Advocate appoints one member to such board, in addition to the existing appointment guidelines for the other 13 members

- Child care advisory board. (NYCC 620)
  - 1 member appointed by Mayor and chair of board designated by Mayor.
  - 1 member appointed by Speaker of the Council.
  - 1 member appointed by the Comptroller.
  - 1 member appointed by Public Advocate.

- Conflicts of interest board. (NYCC 2602)
  - All members appointed with advice and consent of the Council
  - 3 members appointed by Mayor. Chair of board designated by Mayor.
  - 1 member appointed by Public Advocate.
  - 1 member appointed by Comptroller.

Commission Supporting Documents

Plans and Processes

The 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission, appointed by Mayor Mamdani on March 20, 2026, pursuant to Administrative Code Section 3-601, is charged with studying, evaluating and, if it determines appropriate, recommending specific changes to the compensation levels of New York City elected officials. As modified by Local Law 81 of 2026, the Commission is required to submit its recommendations to the Mayor and the Speaker of the City Council. The Mayor may, in his discretion, submit a recommendation to the Speaker for the approval, disapproval or modification of any compensation changes contained in the Commission's report. The City Council, in its discretion, shall consider the recommendations of the Mayor and the Commission and may approve a local law changing the compensation levels of New York City elected officials.

In accordance with the Administrative Code, Quadrennial Commissions are intended to convene every four years (thus, its title). However, the last Commission was convened in 2015 and issued its final report at the end of that year. Nevertheless, that Commission provided an extensive analysis of its role, of the duties of the various New York City elected officials, and the factors that it examined in shaping its recommendations. We appreciate the 2015 Commission's work and believe that it provides a useful starting point for our own approach.

Moreover, the 2015 Commission set forth certain values and principles that we also intend to follow. Among these are a commitment to transparency. All of our research materials, public testimony and written submissions will be posted on this website and, thus, will be publicly accessible.

We intend to hold one public hearing on May 21 at 5 PM in the City Planning Commission's Hearing Room at 120 Broadway. This will be open to all members of the public who wish to testify in person. There will also be an opportunity to testify via Zoom at that hearing. Written testimony will be accepted until May 31. All written comments and testimony submitted to the Commission and a recording and/or transcription of the public hearing will be posted on this website. We especially encourage elected officials, past and present, as well as representatives of civic, good government and other public interest groups to testify.

Issues We Seek to Address

The legislation authorizing the Quadrennial Commission requires us to recommend changes to compensation levels for New York City elected officials "if warranted." It requires us to "take into consideration the duties and responsibilities of each position, the current salary of the position and the length of time since the last change, any change in the cost of living, compression of salary levels for other officers and employees of the city, and salaries and salary trends for positions with analogous duties and responsibilities both within government and in the private sector."

As we carry out this mandate, we will seek to address the following issues, among others:

1. Have the roles of any of the NYC elected officials changed significantly since the 2015 Commission?
2. Assuming we do want to recommend changes to compensation levels, do we want to differentiate percentage changes among positions?
3. What should be the recommended effective date(s) for any proposed changes in compensation levels?
4. Do we want to propose conditions on recommendations for compensation levels for certain positions and, if so, what should they be?
5. Do we want to recommend modifications or conditions to future processes regarding compensation levels and, if so, what should they be?

Staffing

As with the 2015 Commission, none of our extremely limited staff is employed by the City of New York, although we have and will rely on the New York City Law Department for legal and technical assistance.

The Commission staff consists of:

Michael Hyman – Staff Director

Olivia Glen-Rayner – Project Manager

Jordan Tamagni – Editorial Director

All staff are being compensated at $20,000 or less. **Members of the Commission**, as per ordinance, serve without compensation.

In addition, we are extremely fortunate to be aided by staff from City University's Institute for State and Local Governance (ISLG). ISLG is providing all our data and research assistance and coordination.

Chair Weisbrod:
Good evening. We're gonna get started in about 10 minutes, and look forward to it. So, those of you who are watching, Via Zoom. See you soon.

Okay, good evening, and welcome to, the public hearing of the Quadrennial Advisory Commission. My name is Carl Weisbrod, and I'm joined by my fellow commissioners, Larian Angelo, to my right, and Lilliam Barrios-Paoli to my left. The 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission, appointed by Mayor Mamdani on March 20th, 2026, pursuant to Administrative Code Section 3-601, is charged with studying, evaluating, and, if it determines, recommending specific changes to the compensation levels of New York City elected officials. These elected officials include the mayor, the controller, the public advocate, the city council members, the five borough presidents, and the five district attorneys. The last such commission was established in 2015, and issued its report and recommendations at the end of that year. As modified by Local Law 81 of 2026, The Commission is required to submit its recommendations to the Mayor and to the Speaker of the City Council. The Mayor may, in his discretion, submit a recommendation to the Speaker for the approval, disapproval, or modification of any compensation changes contained in our Commission's report. The City Council, in its discretion, shall consider the recommendations of the Mayor and the Commission and may approve a local law changing the compensation levels of New York City elected officials. The legislation authorizing the Quadrennial Advisory Commission requires us to recommend changes to compensation levels for New York City elected officials, quote, if warranted. It requires us to, quote, take into consideration the duties and responsibilities of each position, the current salary of the position, and the length of time since the last change, any change in the cost of living, compression of salary levels for other officers and employees of the city, and salaries and salary trends for positions with analogous duties and responsibilities, both within government and in the private sector. The Commission is being assisted by research and analytics staff from City University's Institute for State and Local Governance. We're enormously grateful for their support. The ISLG–The Institute– has the following analysis that it will undertake, in order to meet its research responsibilities. CUNY ISLG will summarize the current level of compensation for elected officials in New York City. It will analyze trends in compensation for elected officials in New York City relative to their staff, other city workers, and heads of large organizations across New York City. Using public information searches, CUNY ISLG will build a database of levels of compensation among elected officials in the largest cities across the country. For each city, CUNY ISLG will document the local mechanism for changing elected officials' compensation, and how frequently changes occur. CUNY ISLG will also track how compensation for elected officials in these cities have changed over time. And finally, it will compile various income and cost of living measures for New York City and the larger cities nationally, and will track changes in the cost of living over time. We invite you to testify about the appropriate compensation levels for city elected officials in 2026 and in upcoming years, as well as any related recommendations you have regarding elected officials compensation. We also seek to address the following issues, among others. One, have the roles of any of the New York City elected officials changed significantly since the 2015 Commission? Two, have economic or other conditions changed significantly since the 2015 Commission's report that might affect appropriate compensation levels? Three, should we propose conditions on recommendations for compensation levels to certain positions, and if so, what should they be? Four, assuming changes in compensation levels are recommended, should we differentiate percentage raises among different positions? Five, on what date should proposed changes in compensation levels take effect? And six, should we recommend modifications or conditions in future processes for reviewing and setting compensation levels? And if so, what should they be? These issues, as you will see, will be posted on the screen before you, and we welcome your thoughts regarding them. Today's hearing will be hybrid. We welcome your testimony in person or via Zoom. We will first hear from those testifying in person, and then we will hear from those registered via Zoom. Please keep your testimony to 3 minutes or less. All written comments and testimony submitted to the Commission, and a recording and a transcript of the public hearing will be posted on our website. And written comments can be submitted on our website through May 31st. And finally, I just want to express my thanks to the Department of City Planning and the staff of the department for their hospitality in hosting us today. And with that, we will hear from our very first witness, and that is…

Facilitator:
I'm just gonna go over some logistics, and then we will call our first person to testify. As we said, testimony will begin with in-person speakers, followed by participants joining via Zoom. After both groups have completed their testimony, any additional speakers who arrive, either in person or on Zoom, will be permitted to testify as they join. Testimony should be limited to 3 minutes or less. There's a timer right up here. It will make a very obnoxious noise when the 3 minutes is over. Commissioners may ask questions of testifiers following their remarks. For Zoom participants, we will wait to mute speakers until commissioners confirm that all questions have been answered, or that they have no further questions. Please note that there is typically a 2-5 second delay on Zoom between when a speaker is unmuted and when they are able to begin speaking. Elected officials will be moved to the front of the line and permitted to testify upon arrival. The 3-minute testimony limit does not apply to elected officials. Please make sure, when you go up to the podium, that your microphone is on when you're speaking. You'll know, because the light is green, it's just for the recording. And with that, we will start with our first, piece of testimony from Deputy Speaker Williams.

City Council Member Williams:
Good evening, and welcome. Good evening. Okay, great, good evening. Thank you for having me. So, good afternoon, or evening. I represent the 27th Council District in Queens, and I am proud to serve as the Deputy Speaker of the New York City Council. I am pleased to testify before this commission today a body established through Local Law 81 of 2026, legislation I was proud to sponsor. Earlier this year, that law was enacted to require the mayor to convene this Quadrennial Advisory Commission and conduct a transparent, structured review of compensation levels for New York City's elected officials. I sponsored this legislation because I believe deeply that the process for reviewing elected official compensation should be open, transparent, and grounded in the public interest. So just to go over some things, and I truly am the shepherd, because, many of my colleagues, majority of my colleagues are, very eager about this commission. I get questions all the time about it. But I just wanted to level set that the last full review of elected official compensation in New York City took place in 2016. In the years

since, elected officials have received no cost of living adjustments, even as the cost of living in New York City has risen dramatically. Despite the Charter's intent for periodic review, this commission was not convened for nearly a decade, leaving the process dormant during a period of significant economic change. This is not a matter of privilege, and I think through the public deliberation process of my bill, I really refrained from going into any detail. I know some of my colleagues might have made some comments, but I really didn't want to go into detail, but because this commission is created, I just wanted to go a little bit more into detail around the thinking around the bill, the original bill, and then this bill that created this commission. So when compensation fails to keep pace with inflation, and the real cost of living in one of the most expensive cities in the world, we risk narrowing who can realistically afford to serve in public office. at the end to say this, but I think this is a good place to also say that the demographics of the council have changed, and I've heard many of my colleagues talk about that. You know, these are… it's a majority women council, it's a majority people of color council, we have a ton of moms in the council, new moms, and when I think about the historic marginalization of certain demographics economically. And, you know, for me, I just want to make sure that the decision is one based off of a diversity and equity lens, which I hope this commission takes up seriously. And I'll just leave it there. I also recognize that discussions regarding elected official compensation can generate understandable public scrutiny particularly at a time when everyone in New York pretty much is facing economic pressures themselves. That is precisely why this process must remain transparent, so we're excited about this, and grounded in long-term institutional stability, so we don't have to come and do this and cause a political upheaval. It's very frustrating. So I want to be clear about how I believe the Commission should frame any recommendation it makes. This is a cost-of-living adjustment. Like, even when we had the first raise, like to Speaker Adams' credit, they were very, very… concerned about what it would look like, and so when they configured the amount, with the original bill, that was based off of looking at the raises, the last raises that city employees had received. They didn't even go back 10 years, if we were to… if we were to get a cost of living adjustment every year for the last 10 years. They only went back 4 years, recognizing that there was a gap between a COLA for city workers under de Blasio, and so they only calculated that figure based off of 4 years, using the same percentage that was negotiated for city employees for a cost-of-living adjustment. I know it just… it looks like a raise, but it really wasn't based off of, like, we need more money, it was based off of, like, well, we actually have not seen any cost of living adjustments, and even if we just look back 4 years, not the 10, but even if we look back 4 years, I think that's how we got to that original number. I have since done more research, and honestly, in my research, it actually tells an even higher number, which again. up to this commission coming back to us, and then the politics of it all. But I was… it was quite interesting to do… play with numbers, look at, even if we got a 1% COLA, or an average, typically, which I do talk about, is, like, 3%. The number is… more than I thought it was. So, you know, an important distinction, and a raise implies compensation above and beyond what was previously contemplated, whereas a cost of living adjustment simply ensures that compensation retains its real value over time, consistent with how inflation and economic conditions have evolved across city government, annual or recurring cost of living and wage adjustments are a standard part of maintaining competitive and sustainable compensation. In recent years, many municipal employees received an annual increase in the range of approximately 3%. per year, through collective bargaining agreements.

During that same period, elected officials receive no adjustments at all. The principal underlying COLA adjustments is widely recognized across the public sector and should inform this Commission's review as well. Inflation-adjusted analysis demonstrates that compensation for elected officials has lost substantial real value since the last review. So, I humbly urge this Commission to examine the cumulative impact of inflation and make a recommendation grounded in principles of fairness, equity, and economic reality. The responsibilities of a city council member constitute a full-time public service role by any reasonable standard. We write and pass legislation, oversee agencies, represent thousands of constituents responding to emergencies and constituent crises. This morning and this night. Responding to flooding, and work to make every neighborhood in the city safe, stable, and livable. The restrictions placed on outside income for elected officials are significant and appropriate, but they also mean that compensation must be sufficient on its own to allow people from all walks of life to serve. If you want the council to reflect the diversity of New York City, including working families, immigrants, teachers, nurses, small business owners, and first-generation New Yorkers, then the compensation structure must make that possible. When compensation stagnates while costs rise, we narrow the pipeline. So, I commend you all for this work, and for the seriousness with which you are approaching this review, and, again, I just hope that you all consider, any quote-unquote pay increases be reflected of simply a cost of living adjustment for the extended period without review since 2016, and that it reflects the current economic realities of New Yorkers. Thank you.

Chair Weisbrod:
Thank you, thank you very much, Doctor. Questions?

Commissioner Angelo:
Oh, questions. No, I have no questions, thank you.

Chair Weisbrod:
I do have a question, which is, as you know, We're called a quadrennial commission because it was envisioned that these advisory commissions would be… Created every 4 years, and as you testified. they seem, at least in the last couple of decades, to have been created every 10 years or so. Do you have any suggestions for… How they should… End up being back on track every 4 years, and… What mechanisms we might want to recommend to encourage that?

Council Member Williams
Well… Local Law 81, I do think a part of what we included in the bill kind of requires this differently than it did before. I think it was merely, like, the mayor should do this. Obviously, there's no real penalties. I do believe that Local Law 81 added additional teeth. I can find out, but that was a part of the thinking, so we don't have to be back here again. That's the only thing I can think of, because at the end of the day, and as a council member, I see this all the time, and we see it at the federal level, right? Like, laws are only good as people are willing to follow them, and that's the reality of government. And so, you know, if we can increase the teeth, which I do believe Local Law 81 thought to do that, then it would compel whomever the mayor is to make sure that they convene this commission, or there'll be a different type of penalty. I just

think there isn't any real penalty, and so maybe that's just the larger suggestion, the penalty for a mayor to convene this commission, and because this is, like, a mayoral commission, it doesn't also… like, some… some commissions get appointed by many people, right? You might have the public advocate giving a suggestion. You might have the comptroller giving a suggestion. You might have a borough president being able to put a person on the board. You might have the speaker of the council being able to appoint someone to particular tons of commissions that the city has. This commission is only all mayoral appointees, so it also, you know, again, rests on the mayor to do. It doesn't, you know, add additional pressures from other city officials to play a role in ensuring that the commission actually takes place.

Chair Weisbrod:
Thanks very much.

Council Member Williams:
You're welcome.

Facilitator:
Thank you. Next, we will hear from Rachel Fauss.

Rachel Fauss, Reinvent Albany:
Okay. Good evening. My name is Rachel Fauss, I'm the Senior Policy Advisor for reInvent Albany. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. Reinvent Albany supports pay for government leaders that reflects the importance of their decisions on the everyday lives of New Yorkers, and encourages high-quality and diverse candidates to seek public office. However, if New York City's leaders expect more pay, they should expect more accountability, especially in the wake of massive corruption scandals that recently rocked City Hall. Reinvent Albany urges the Commission to couple any proposed salary increase with these three reasonable actions. First, banning third-party travel payments, and we submitted additional data to the Commission along these lines. Two, easier public access to financial disclosure statements. And three, quadrennial commission appointment and process reforms. Before getting into the details, we want to note how important it is that the Quad General Commission is underway, and that the Mayor and Council agreed not to act to raise salaries without independent review. The Quadrennial Commission is an important safeguard against unreasonable, politicized pay increases, and should be welcomed by government leaders for helping to legitimize regular, deserved salary increases. And we and our colleagues noted this to the Council in our letter of December 2025. On third-party travel payments, we strongly believe that the risk of corruption is too great to continue to exempt travel payments from the city's gift ban. Allowing travel payments to be gifted to officials contributes to the public's perception that officials can be easily influenced by special interest groups. The solution is simple. If it is truly related to one's official public duties to attend a conference or visit a location, it should be paid for with taxpayer dollars. The Administrative Code and Conflict of interest board rules together are intended to curb corrupt corruption and conflicts of interest. They recognize that third-party travel payments are a form of outside enrichment and require disclosure of payments over 1,000 on financial disclosure statements. This disclosure

requirement is important because it confirms that New York City government recognizes that third-party travel benefits are a thing of value that public officials are getting because of the office they hold. Because of this, we believe that eliminating these payments are within the purview of the Quadrennial Commission. The central role of third-party travel benefits and the scandals of the Adams administration underlines their potential for abuse. As does the continued public scrutiny over those paid to other officials. And again, I just point to the data that we submitted to the Commission, and it's available on reInvent Albany's website. Regarding financial disclosure statements, when the Council raised salaries last in 2016, from after the last review, it recognized improvements were needed to transparency of disclosure statements, and passed legislation requiring that they be published online for elected officials. We believe there's more work to do to improve transparency, and recommend publishing them in an open data format. Publishing more disclosures online, including for all senior public officials, and no longer requiring notification to filers of requests for financial disclosure statements. We believe this has a chilling effect, and the state does not require this for the identity of persons requesting them. And then I'd point to the independent recommendations for the Commission. That I can discuss in questions, or you can read on the testimony. Thank you.

Chair Weisbrod:
Thank you. I do have a question. With respect to the… you did submit data regarding travel reimbursements and provisions, but… Would… Was that… is it… and I know that the amount of money has increased significantly. Has it become more widespread, or is it actually… Just one or two cases where the travel payments were significant?

Rachel Fauss, Reinvent Albany:
It does seem like it has increased. I will note that our data is from 2020 to 2024. Obviously, in 2020 and 2021, there wasn't a lot of travel going on during the pandemic, but, you know, the 2025 data is not out yet, but I expect to see an increase in that, and certainly if it comes out within the time this Commission is operating, we'd be happy to, update our analysis for you.

Chair Weisbrod:
Okay, thank you.

Commissioner Angelo:
I, I have a question. What sort of activity in a, in a, in a travel would be assumed to be, good for the city? So what, I mean, so if a council member or someone else is getting on a plane and going to a country, what would you expect to say, oh, this is valuable to the city? How would you… how would you determine that?

Rachel Fauss, Reinvent Albany:
Well, there are currently rules for the… that determination from the Conflicts of Interest Board, and that is to allow that payment to be made and not be exempt under the gift clause. So, it has to be related to public duties. So, for example, attending a conference about a policy issue, or if it is travel to another country, presumably it would relate to constituents who may be from those areas. I think that the issue isn't the notion that elected officials shouldn't travel and learn. I think

the notion is who pays for it is the problem in our… in our view. And that, you know, it's not a huge amount of money that was reported, you know, $77,000 in the grand scheme of the city budget. That could be paid for with taxpayer dollars rather than from third parties who may have an interest in City government taking action on those policy items that might be discussed.

Chair Weisbrod:
Thank you very much.

Rachel Fauss, Reinvent Albany:
Thank you.

Facilitator:
Thank you. We see we've been joined by Councilmembers Gutierrez and Brewer on Zoom. If you would like to testify, please raise your hand on Zoom, and we will bring you over as a panelist. We will wait a little bit to see if you raise your hand. Okay, next up is Ben Weinberg.

Ben Weinberg, Citizens Union:
Oh, it's open, right? Can you hear me? Great. Hi, good evening, Commissioners. My name is Ben Weinberg, and I'm the Director of Public Policy at Citizens Union, a nonpartisan good government group that has worked for honest and accountable government and open and fair elections for nearly 130 years. We have testified before many pay commissions, and several of our recommendations were adopted through prior processes, and we also advocated strongly for this specific commission to be formed after our council members first sought to bypass master process. So we're glad the integrity of this process has been preserved. I'll make just a few brief comments in the time allotted, and our written testimony includes further details. So, first on salaries, Citizens Union strongly supports increasing elected official salaries. Competitive pay attracts strong candidates. enables people who are not independently wealthy to serve, and reduces incentives for corruption. A decade has passed since the last adjustment, and the cost of living in New York has risen substantially in that time. Of course, the precise percentage depends on the benchmark numbers, the CPI data, and other data that the Commission will collect. On the effective date, which is another question you raised. We have long supported prospective salary adjustments, so increases that take effect after an election, so voters can weigh in. But the current, circumstances are unusual. The last two commissions were never appointed, as mentioned, producing a 10-year freeze, and of the… on our account, under 64 incumbents affected. Our count is that 45 were first elected before 2024, so they've never seen a compensation review during their tenure. So this is a fundamentally different situation than, from officials raising their own pay midterm. So for that reason, we do support a one-time increase taking effect in 2026, this year. Now, on process reform, another question you raised, we believe any implementing legislation should also fix the problems that we've seen around the commission process, which the chair raised earlier. And we know three reforms. The first one is the most important one. We think the mayor should not be able to simply ignore the appointment mandate, as three mayors have now done. In fact, over the past quarter century, salaries have been reviewed and increased only twice. If this pattern continues, council members will eventually succeed in bypassing the commission process altogether, and, you

know, their frustration is completely understandable. What we think should happen, the admin code should be amended to authorize another citywide official, like the Comptroller. to appoint a commission if the mayor fails to do… to act by the legal deadline. It's essentially a backstop appointment method. So that's the solution that we think needs to be in place. Second, we think the Commission cycle should be restored to the third year of the term. So that the next commission will be established, I may continue just a bit longer.

Chair Weisbrod:
Thank you. Please, please finish, and you can submit testimony, as you know, then…

Ben Weinberg, Citizens Union:
Yes, I've submitted it. So that the next commission will be established January 2028, The recent change that the Council adopted moved it to the first year of a four-year term. That was done to solve the current salary freeze issue, but in the long term, that creates, we believe, real practical risks and political risks. That means that a newly inaugurated mayor will need to establish a new commission in the first 15 days of their term. That's, somewhat unlikely given all the things that the new mayor has to do, and also politically a bit risky as one of the first acts for a new mayor. So, that's why we believe the cycle should return to be in the third year of a term. Thank you, thank you, and I'll wrap here.

Chair Weisbrod:
I do have a question about that. So, just the mechanics of it. So, we, as you say, you would suggest that we… recommend salary increases we're going to recommend increases in 2026. And so, are you proposing that the next commission… be appointed in 2028? Is that… ?

Ben Weinberg, Citizens Union:
That's true. I know it's a very short time frame from the… coming, adjustment. And then that commission could decide that no pay raises are in order, or that very minor ones are in order. But we think that, kind of, going back to the current cycle, keeping the pattern that we have we have tried to see, is beneficial for the city in the long run.

Chair Weisbrod:
Okay, thank you. Dr. Angelo. Okay, thank you very much.

Ben Weinberg, Citizens Union:
Thank you, Commissioners.

Facilitator:
Thank you. If you are on Zoom and you would like to speak, please raise your hand. If not, we will keep the Zoom open, and welcome more testimony when new people come. Thank you.

If you are on Zoom and you would like to testify, please raise your hand.

Chair Weisbrod:
We note that there's no other speakers that are here in person. or on Zoom, ready to speak. Therefore, we are… Going to keep this hearing and the Zoom open until 6.30. But barring other speakers we will close the hearing at 6.30. So… for anyone… On Zoom, or… Otherwise… through some emanation hearing this, we will keep this hearing open until 6.30, and of course, welcome anyone who wishes to speak before then.

I note that the time is now 6.30, and, we have no… Individuals… either in person or on Zoom, that are prepared or wish to testify. And with that, I am going to… I'll bring this hearing to a close. And I, again. Anyone who's listening or watching, we will be delighted to accept written testimony through May 31st. And with that, I wish everyone a very happy, relaxing Memorial Day weekend. Thank you.

Scope of Work: Research Consultant, CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance

The 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission (the "Commission") has engaged the CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance (CUNY ISLG) to provide comprehensive research, data collection, and analytical support. CUNY ISLG will support the Commission by providing research and analysis that addresses the Commission's key questions and data needs, including those related to the compensation of elected officials in New York City and in comparable cities across the country, inflation and the cost of living in New York City, and wage trends over time.

Scope of Services

CUNY ISLG shall:

- Collect, synthesize, and analyze quantitative and qualitative data relevant to compensation of City elected officials.
- Produce data visualizations, tables, notes, and other materials to be used in the Commission's report.
- Attend Commission meetings and the public hearing and provide subject-matter expertise, as requested.

Research Areas and Data Collection Requirements

CUNY ISLG will conduct analysis across at least the following areas. To the extent possible, CUNY ISLG will examine trends in each area from at least 2016 forward.

1. Analysis Concerning Compensation Levels for City Elected Officials
   CUNY ISLG will summarize the current level of compensation for elected officials in New York City.
2. Comparison of City Elected Officials Compensation Relative to Wages for Others in New York
   CUNY ISLG will analyze trends in compensation for elected officials in New York City relative to other city workers and heads of large organizations in New York City. This may include:
   - Analysis of pay for City elected officials relative to the City's civil service
   - Analysis of pay for City elected officials relative to selected appointed officials in New York City government, public authorities, and elected officials in New York State government
   - Analysis of pay for City elected officials relative to New York City non-profit executives, private executives, university executives, and union leaders

3. Analysis of Compensation for Elected Officials in Other Cities Across the Country
   Using public information searches, CUNY ISLG will build a database of compensation levels among elected officials in large cities across the country. This may include:
   - Analysis of how compensation has changed since 2016 for elected officials in other large cities across the country
   - Summary of the mechanism used to set compensation for elected officials in other cities across the country and how often compensation changes occur
   - Analysis of elected official compensation relative to local cost of living

4. Analysis of Income and Cost of Living in New York City and Other Cities Across the Country
   CUNY ISLG will compile various income and cost of living measures for New York City and the largest cities across the country. This may include:
   - Analysis of cost of living for different types of households (e.g., single-person households; households with children)
   - Analysis of income measures including median household income
   - Analysis of real income trends over time (controlling for inflation)

5. Other Related Topics of Interest to the Commission
   Additional areas of research may arise over the course of this engagement. Given the short time frame of this project, CUNY ISLG and the Commission will weigh the importance of additional research requests relative to outstanding items.

Methodology and Data Sources

The CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance (CUNY ISLG) provided extensive data and research assistance and coordination for this report. The following appendix provides methodology and data source information for the analyses included in this report. To the extent possible, CUNY ISLG analyzed data since the 2015 commission.

Analysis Concerning Compensation Levels for City Elected Officials

Using data acquired by the Commission from the City and otherwise sourced from public information, CUNY ISLG summarized the current level of compensation for elected officials in New York City. In addition to this summation, ISLG used economic data to benchmark salaries to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This included analysis of pay overtime benchmarked to inflation; analysis of real vs. nominal salaries; analysis of pay relative to staff serving in elected officials' offices; and analysis of fringe benefits.

Data sources include:

- New York City Mayor's Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
- New York City Law Department
- New York City Office of Payroll Administration (OPA)
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (CBSA)

Analysis of Compensation for Elected Officials in Other Cities Across the Country

Using public information searches, CUNY ISLG built a database of compensation among elected officials in the ten largest cities across the country, plus two other high cost of living cities. For each city, CUNY ISLG documented the local mechanism for changing elected officials' compensation, and how frequently changes occur. This included analysis of comparable cities; an analysis of current levels of compensation among elected officials in other larger cities across the country and how compensation has changed over time; a summary of the mechanisms used to set compensation for elected officials and the frequency of changes; a summary of whether outside employment/income is permitted for elected officials; and an analysis of elected official pay adjusted for cost of living and relative to New York City's cost of living.

Data sources include:

- **U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS):** The ACS provides current and historical individual and household economic information for cities nationwide, including median household income.
- **U.S. Census Gazetteer Files:** Provides geographic area estimates.
- **Lincoln Institute of Land Policy:** Fiscally Standardized Cities (FiSC) database provides estimates of local government finances for large cities nationwide.
- **U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA):** Real personal income and regional price parities by Metropolitan Statistical Area.

- **Tax Foundation:** Uses BEA regional price parities to calculate Purchasing Power by Metropolitan Area.
- **U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:** Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items. Specific CPI used for each metropolitan area. Indexed to 2000 unless otherwise noted.

Process and sources for identifying elected officials' compensation in cities nationwide:

Public information searches were used to build a database consisting of compensation for elected officials in 12 cities across the county from 2016 – 2026 (the ten largest cities in the U.S. plus an additional two high-cost cities). The database also includes policy information detailing the mechanism(s) by which each city sets compensation for local officials. To build this database, CUNY ISLG engaged in a multistep process:

1. First, CUNY ISLG identified official sources for each city, including charters, municipal codes, salary ordinances, compensation commission reports, ballot materials, state-law sources, budget books, ACFRs, payroll portals, city open-data datasets, and local publications. The initial list was compiled by ChatGPT, and additional sources were collected as needed during manual reviews. Source documents were downloaded via a codex agent or manually saved into a local source library, and each source was tracked in a source inventory.
2. Second, CUNY ISLG developed custom Python scripts to extract structured values from the local source library. These scripts parsed official PDFs, spreadsheets, CSVs, HTML files, open-data exports, and budget datasets; applied city-specific source-priority and salary-formula rules; and produced standardized CSV outputs for current and historic salaries and salary-setting methods. The extraction pipeline gathered relevant snippets of text for each city and office, prioritized snippets based on source type and confidence score, and pulled the top candidates. Extracted rows retained source URLs, source excerpts, source types, confidence/review flags, and notes.
3. CUNY ISLG then instituted a quality assurance workflow using reviewer workbooks. Reviewers checked values against source excerpts and linked documents, resolved conflicts, corrected values where needed, filled remaining gaps, and preserved notes on uncertainty or source limitations.

CUNY ISLG used the best available data to document changes in salary. For cities with adjustments by CPI or other automatic adjustments, salary data are pulled from payroll information. For other cities, most salary data came from city statutes or other published city sources. A comprehensive list of sources used in CUNY ISLG's analysis can be found below.

CITY	SOURCES FOR SALARY ADJUSTMENT METHODS
BOSTON	Boston City Charter Boston City Charter Cape Cod Times
CHICAGO	Chicago City Code Chicago City Code
DALLAS	Dallas City Charter Texas State Code Texas District & County Attorneys Association
HOUSTON	Texas State Code Compensation of Certain Prosecutors Texas District & County Attorneys Association
JACKSONVILLE	Jacksonville City Code SALARIES FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS Office of Economic and Demographic Research
LOS ANGELES	Los Angeles City Charter
NEW YORK CITY	New York City Charter
PHILADELPHIA	Philadelphia City Code Cost of Living Adjustments Pennsylvania Statutes
PHOENIX	Phoenix City Code Arizona Statutes
SAN ANTONIO	San Antonio Charter Amendment Election Proposition A Compensation of Certain Prosecutors Texas District & County Attorneys Association San Antonio Report
SAN DIEGO	San Diego City Charter San Diego County Ordinance
SAN FRANCISCO	San Francisco City Charter

CITY	SOURCES FOR COMPENSATION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS:
BOSTON	Employee Earnings Report Boston.com
CHICAGO	Chicago Data Portal – Positions and Salaries
DALLAS	Dallas Charter
HOUSTON	Houston City Payroll Houston 2016 CAFR
JACKSONVILLE	Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research 2026
LOS ANGELES	CalMatters
NEW YORK CITY	NYC Local Laws
PHILADELPHIA	Employee Earnings
PHOENIX	City Charter Election Information and Results
SAN ANTONIO	Charter Amendment Election Proposition A —F San Antonio Express
SAN DIEGO	The City of San Diego 2018 Salary Setting Commission's Recommendations Government Compensation in California Adjusted Salaries for Elected Officials
SAN FRANCISCO	Government Compensation in California Civil Service Commission Civil Service Commission PBS

CITY	SOURCES ON OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT/INCOME
BOSTON	Conflict of interest law explanation for City Councilors
CHICAGO	A Plain English Ethics Guide for City Personnel Concerning Second Jobs
DALLAS	City Code Conflicting Outside Employment
HOUSTON	Houston Landing
JACKSONVILLE	Secondary Employment
LOS ANGELES	City Charter Restriction on Outside Activities
NEW YORK CITY	Rules of the Council Outside Income
PHILADELPHIA	City Code Conflict of Interest
PHOENIX	Elected Officials Ethics Handbook
SAN ANTONIO	The City of San Antonio Ethics Code
SAN DIEGO	Unlawful Activities of City Officials
SAN FRANCISCO	City and County of San Francisco Ethics Commission Incompatible & Prohibited Activities – City Officers and Employees

Comparison of City Elected Officials Compensation Relative to Wages for Others in New York

CUNY ISLG analyzed trends in compensation for elected officials in New York City relative to other city workers and heads of large area organizations. This included analysis of pay for City elected officials relative to the City's civil service, including analysis of City (DC37) collective bargaining increases; analysis of pay for City elected officials relative to selected appointed officials in New York City government, public authorities, and elected officials in New York State government; and analysis of pay for City elected officials relative to New York City non-profit executives, private executives, university executives, union leaders, and overall private sector wages.

Data sources included:

Compensation for other elected and appointed officials in New York as well as for nonprofit executives were sourced from each position's respective organization's documentation.

DATA	SOURCE
New York Government Elected Officials and Public Authority Officials' salaries	SeeThroughNY Payroll Databased provided by Empire Center for Public Policy.
Union Officials salaries	NonProfit Explorer by ProPublica. Online access to 990s. Note: In one instance, salary information was accessed on The Center for Union Facts.
Nonprofit Employees	NonProfit Explorer by ProPublica. Online access to 990s.
Private Sector Employees	Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics and Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.
DC37 Increases	New York City and DC37 MOUs.

Analysis of Income and Cost of Living in New York City and Other Cities Across the Country

CUNY ISLG compiled income and cost of living measures for New York City and the largest cities nationally. These measures are included throughout the report but are primarily used to provide context to how cost of living in New York City has changed since the previous report. The cost-of-living analysis included analysis of CPI and purchasing power changes from 2016–2025; analysis of median household income, childcare costs, and median rent costs from 2016–2025; and analysis of the true cost of living in New York City.

Data sources included:

DATA	SOURCE
Consumer Price Index (Inflation Indicator)	U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (CBSA)
Median Household Income	Median household income in the past 12 months: 2024 American Community Survey 1-year estimates (Table B19013); U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). Note: ACS 1-year estimates are not available for 2020.
Median Gross Rent	U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2024 1 year estimates. Table B25064: Median Gross Rent, New York City. Note: ACS 1-year estimates are not available for 2020.
Median Asking Price- 2 Bedroom	StreetEasy. (2025). Median Asking Price for Two Bedroom Apartments, New York City. StreetEasy Data Dashboard.
Average Infant Child Care Costs	New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Local Commissioners Memorandum. Child Care Market Rates.
NYC True Cost of Living	Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice, City of New York. (2026, April 6). NYC True Cost of Living Measure.

Tables and Figures

SALARY RECOMMENDATION

Year	Change in CPI Over Previous Year	Mayor	Public Advocate	Comptroller	Borough Presidents	City Council Members	City Council Speaker	District Attorneys*
2022 (same as 2016)	6.10%	$258,750	$184,800	$209,050	$179,200	$148,500	$164,500	$212,800
2023	3.82%	$274,534	$196,073	$221,802	$190,131	$157,559	$174,535	$225,781
2024	3.79%	$285,021	$203,563	$230,275	$197,394	$163,577	$181,202	$234,406
2025	3.36%	$295,823	$211,278	$239,002	$204,875	$169,777	$188,069	$243,290
Recommendation for 2026		**$305,800**	**$218,400**	**$247,100**	**$211,800**	**$175,500**	**$194,400**	**$251,500**
Change Since 2016		**18.20%**	**18.20%**	**18.20%**	**18.20%**	**18.20%**	**18.20%**	**18.20%**

*District Attorney salaries were set to $212,800 in 2016. Further adjustments were tied to NYS Supreme Court judges. Salaries increased to $232,600 in 2024 and $237,300 in 2026.

SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (CBSA)
NOTES: Data represents the average annual Consumer Price Index for the NY Metropolitan Area and is indexed to 100 at 2000. This table also presents year over year percent change. Percent change in salary is compounded each year.

CHANGES OVER TIME IN ELECTED OFFICIALS' SALARIES

	1999-2005	2006-2015	2016-2026
MAYOR	$195,000	$225,000	$258,750
PUBLIC ADVOCATE	$150,000	$165,000	$184,800
COMPTROLLER	$160,000	$185,000	$209,050
BOROUGH PRESIDENTS	$135,000	$160,000	$179,200
CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS	$90,000	$112,500	$148,500
DISTRICT ATTORNEYS*	$150,000	$190,000	$237,300

*District Attorney salaries were set to $212,800 in 2016. Further adjustments were tied to NYS Supreme Court judges. Salaries increased to $232,600 in 2024 and $237,300 in 2026.

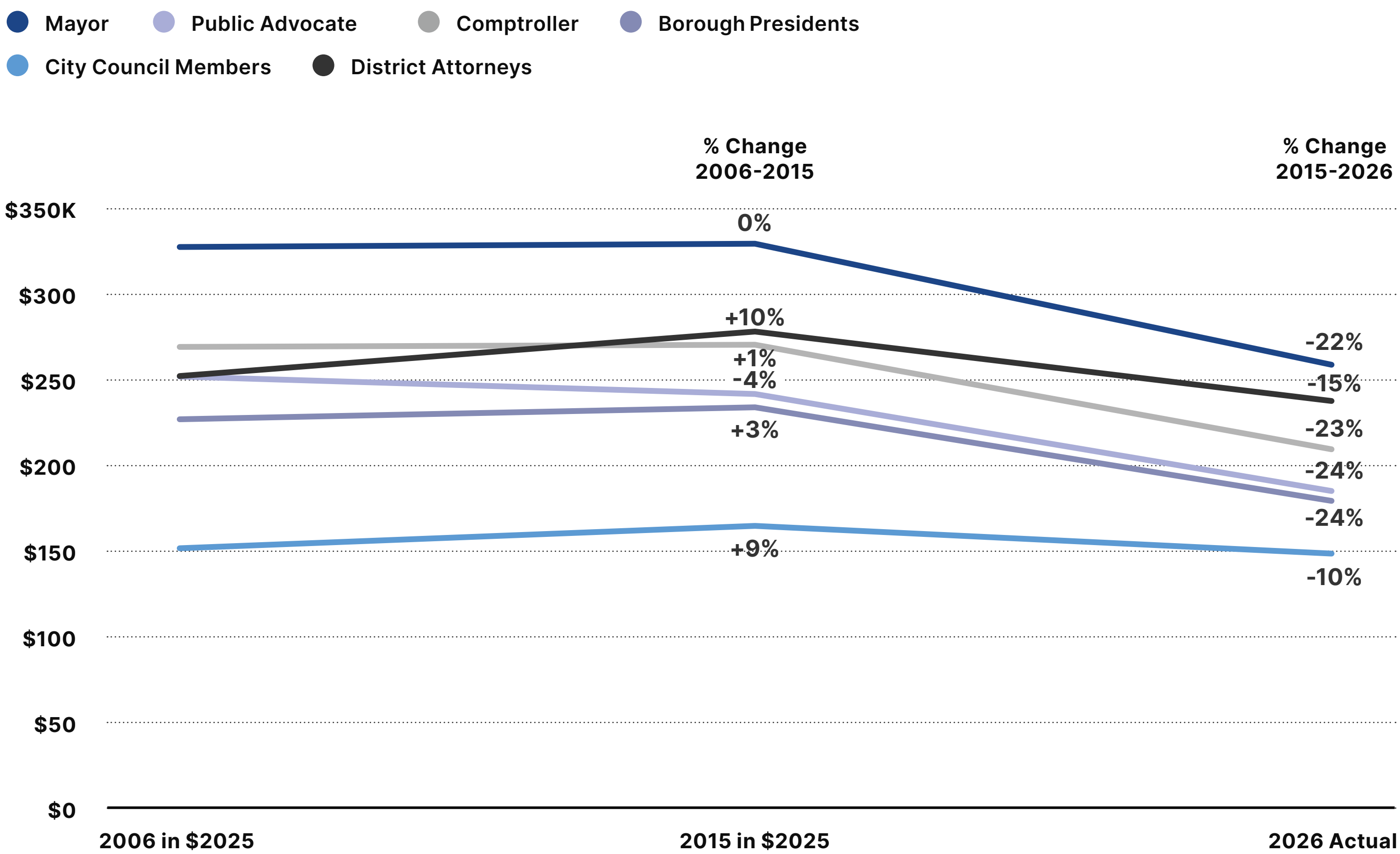
CHANGES OVER TIME IN ELECTED OFFICIALS' SALARIES, CHANGE IN CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI), AND RECOMMENDED SALARY INCREASES SINCE 2006

	1999-2005			2006-2015			2016-2026
Official	**Salary in Effect**	**Recom-mended Increase (for 2006) %**	**Enacted Increase (for 2006)**	**Salary in Effect**	**Recom-mended Increase (for 2016)%**	**Enacted Increase (for 2016)**	**Salary in Effect**
MAYOR	$195,000	15.38%	15.38%	$225,000	15%	15%	$258,750
PUBLIC ADVOCATE	$150,000	10.00%	10.00%	$165,000	12%	12%	$184,800
COMPTROLLER	$160,000	15.63%	15.63%	$185,000	13%	13%	$209,050
BOROUGH PRESIDENTS	$135,000	18.52%	18.52%	$160,000	12%	12%	$179,200
CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS*	$90,000	25.00%	25.00%	$112,500	23%	32%	$148,500
DISTRICT ATTORNEYS	$150,000	26.67%	26.67%	$190,000	12%	12%**	$212,800 (2016-2024) $232,600 (2024-March 2026) $237,300 (April 2026)
Change in CPI	**20%**			**18%**			**31%**

*The 2015 Quadrennial Advisory Commission recommended the elimination of lulus and to classify the job as full-time.
**District Attorney salaries were set to $212,800 in 2016, reflecting the recommended 12% increase. Further adjustments were tied to NYS Supreme Court judges. Salaries increased to $232,600 in 2024 and $237,300 in 2026.

SOURCES: New York City Quadrennial Advisory Commission Final Report, 2015; New York City Office of Payroll Administration; Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (CBSA)
NOTE: CPI growth is through 2025.

CHANGE OVER TIME IN ELECTED OFFICIALS' REAL SALARIES (SALARIES ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION)



SOURCES: New York City Quadrennial Advisory Commission Final Report, 2015; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (CBSA)

NOTE: Salaries are adjusted to 2025 dollars.

SALARIES OF STAFF IN ELECTED OFFICIALS' AGENCIES

	MANAGERIAL			NON-MANAGERIAL		
Agency	Number of Staff	Average Salary	Number of Staff Earning More than Elected Official	Number of Staff	Average Salary	Number of Staff Earning More than Elected Official
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR	304	$149,000	17	47	$73,946	
BOROUGH PRESIDENT-MANHATTAN	11	$128,113		35	$83,293	
BOROUGH PRESIDENT-BRONX	10	$135,421	1	45	$86,683	1
BOROUGH PRESIDENT-BROOKLYN	5	$141,244		57	$90,126	
BOROUGH PRESIDENT-QUEENS	10	$129,282		52	$83,568	
BOROUGH PRESIDENT-STATEN ISLAND	3	$128,251		22	$82,760	
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER	222	$170,011	35	471	$83,487	
PUBLIC ADVOCATE	21	$117,579	1	29	$70,332	
CITY COUNCIL	206	$143,524	90	605	$87,871	16
DISTRICT ATTORNEY NEW YORK COUNTY	104	$151,348		1617	$94,333	
DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRONX COUNTY	35	$176,524		1164	$100,199	
DISTRICT ATTORNEY KINGS COUNTY	19	$164,998		1367	$95,329	
DISTRICT ATTORNEY QUEENS COUNTY	35	$142,395		891	$98,951	
DISTRICT ATTORNEY RICHMOND COUNTY	8	$160,490		231	$102,988	7

SOURCES: New York City Office of Payroll Administration

NEW YORK CITY FRINGE BENEFITS, FY26

COMPONENT	CIVILIAN
PENSION	14.79%
SOCIAL SECURITY	7.85%
HEALTH INSURANCE	27.98%
SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS	4.23%
WORKER'S COMPENSATION	1.20%
UNEMPLOYMENT	0.09%
MTA PAYROLL TAX	0.65%
Total	**56.79%**

SOURCES: New York City Office of Management and Budget

NYC DEPUTY POSITION SALARIES

ELECTED OFFICIAL'S OFFICE	SALARY, 2015	SALARY, 2026	CHANGE SINCE 2015
MAYOR		$258,750	
First Deputy Mayor (2026)	$256,819	$124,192	-52%
First Deputy Mayor (2025)	$256,819	$313,941	22%
Deputy Mayor	$215,833	$290,000	34%
Corporation Counsel	$214,413	$290,000	35%
Commissioner Of Health	$214,413	$286,627	34%
Fire Commissioner	$214,413	$286,627	34%
Police Commissioner	$214,413	$286,627	34%
Chancellor of Education	$212,614	$363,000	71%
BOROUGH PRESIDENT		$179,200	
Deputy Borough President - Manhattan	$145,652	$160,000	10%
Deputy Borough President - Bronx	$159,876	$184,365	15%
Deputy Borough President - Brooklyn	$142,100	$170,000	20%
Deputy Borough President - Queens	$135,000	$178,333	-
Deputy Borough President - Staten Island	$148,820	$157,000	5%
COMPTROLLER		$209,050	
First Deputy Comptroller	$205,896	$260,000	26%
PUBLIC ADVOCATE		$184,800	
First Assistant to the Public Advocate	$143,371	$172,186	20%
COUNCIL MEMBER		$148,500	
Average Managerial Salary		$143,524	-
DISTRICT ATTORNEY		$237,300	
Deputy District Attorney - Manhattan	$195,000	$230,000	18%
Deputy District Attorney - Bronx	$198,000	$231,600	17%
Deputy District Attorney - Brooklyn	$189,000	$233,000	23%
Deputy District Attorney - Queens	$203,320	$222,000	9%
Deputy District Attorney - Staten Island	$198,705	$267,474	35%
Special Narcotics	$192,000	$231,600	21%

SOURCES: New York City office of Management and Budget; New York City Office of Payroll Administration; New York City Quadrennial Advisory Commission Final Report, 2015; SeeThroughNY

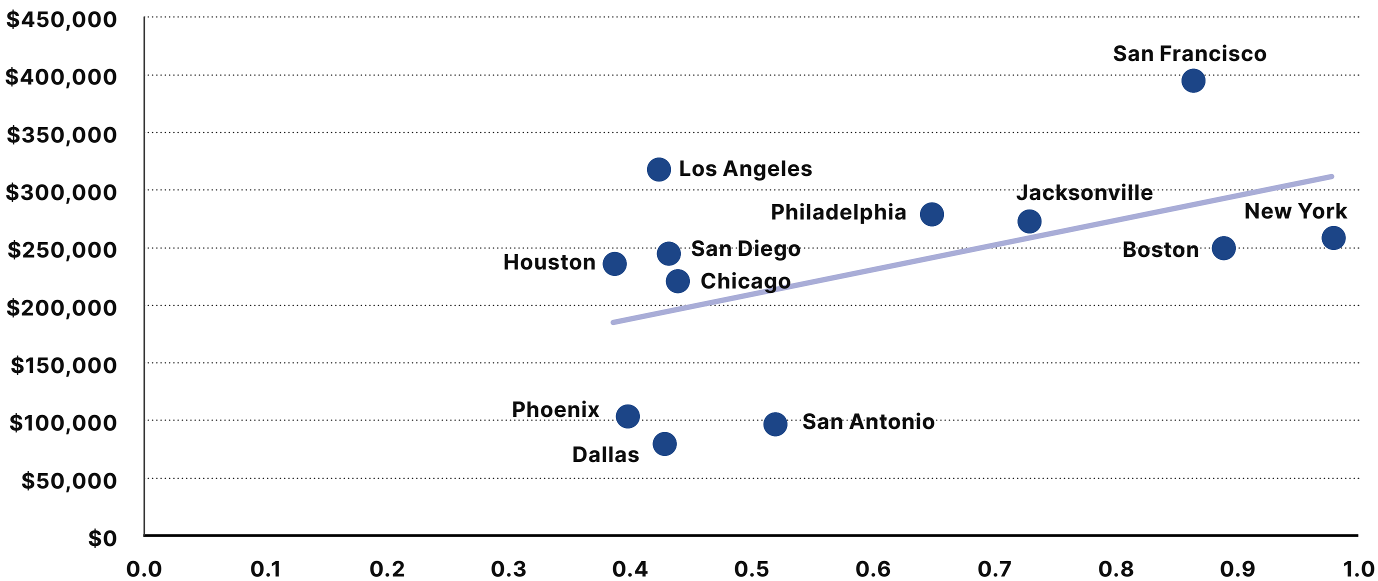
US CITIES FOR COMPARISON: SUMMARY TABLE (LATEST)

City	Population	Median Household Income	True Cost Of Living For Median Family	Change In CPI, 2016-2025	Current Mayor's Salary (2025/26)	Change In Mayor's Salary Since 2016	Current City Council Salary (2025/26)	Change In City Council Salary Since 2016
BOSTON	673,458	$97,791	$171,717	33%	$250,000	43%	$125,000	26%
CHICAGO		$80,613	$134,156	31%	$221,052	2%	$155,688	34%
DALLAS	1,326,087	$74,323	$127,223	38%	$80,000	33%	$60,000	0%
HOUSTON	2,390,125	$64,361	$125,496	28%	$236,189	0%	$62,983	0%
JACKSONVILLE		$72,389	$116,597	34%	$273,260	50%	$63,660	33%
LOS ANGELES		$82,263	$156,268	38%	$318,145	31%	$244,727	31%
NEW YORK		$81,228	$156,273	31%	$258,750	0%	$148,500	0%
PHILADELPHIA	1,573,916	$60,521	$121,448	32%	$279,391	28%	$165,941	28%
PHOENIX	1,673,164	$85,246	$140,073	43%	$103,840	18%	$77,000	13%
SAN ANTONIO		$66,176	$124,009	34%	$96,600	57%	$77,300	69%
SAN DIEGO		$111,032	$169,118	41%	$244,727	144%	$183,545	143%
SAN FRANCISCO	827,526	$139,801	$216,694	34%		33%	$180,128	56%

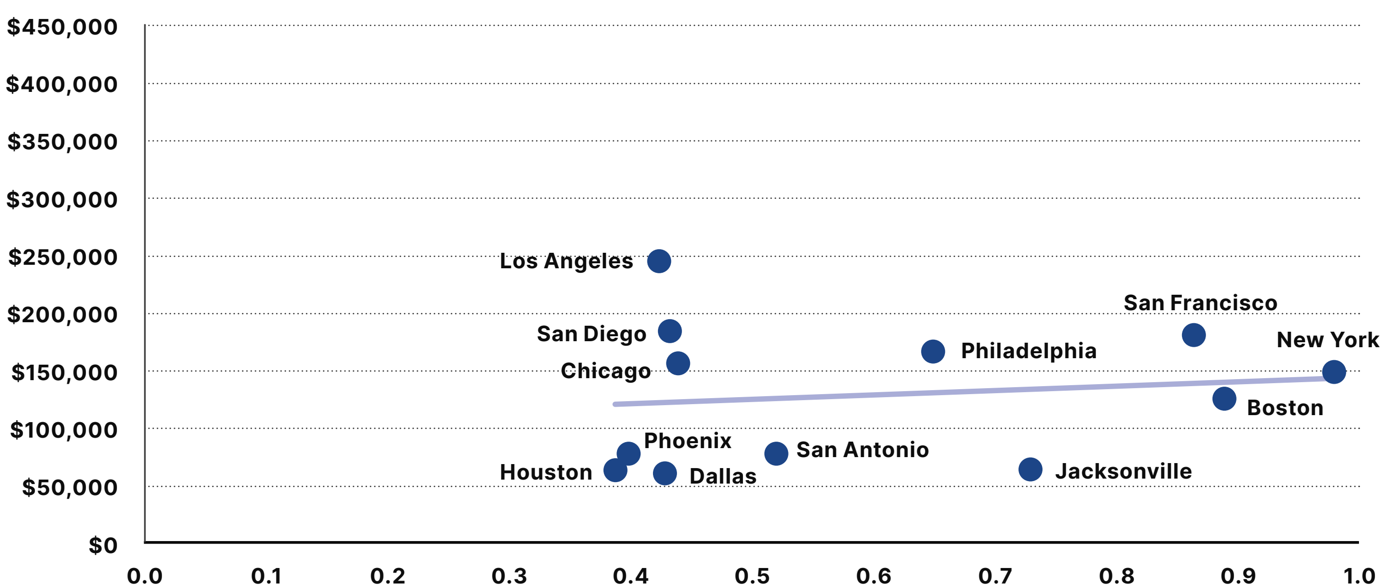
SOURCES: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Incorporated Places of 20,000 or More, Ranked by July 1, 2024 Population: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2024 (SUB-IP-EST2024-ANNRNK). U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. May 2025; U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). Median household income in the past 12 months (in 2024 inflation-adjusted dollars): 2024 American Community Survey 1-year estimates (Table B19013); U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). Median gross rent (dollars): 2024 American Community Survey 1-year estimates (Table B25064); Acs, Gregory, Ilham Dehry, Linda Giannarelli, and Margaret Todd. January 2025. "Tabulations for Measuring the True Cost of Economic Security." Urban Institute. https://datacatalog.urban.org/dataset/measuring-true-cost-economic-security-2022; International City/County Management Association (ICMA)

NOTES: True cost of living data is only available for 2022 and at the County Level; for cities that span multiple counties, the primary county was chosen. For NYC, the five counties were averaged.

MAYORAL SALARY (2025/2026) AND CITY FISCAL CONTROL RATIO



CITY COUNCIL SALARY (2025/2026) AND CITY FISCAL CONTROL RATIO



SOURCES: International City/County Management Association (ICMA); Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. (2025). Fiscally Standardized Cities (FiSC) Database. Retrieved from https://www.lincolninst.edu/data/fiscally-standardized-cities/

NOTE: City Fiscal Control ratio tells you what share of all local government spending on behalf of city residents is handled directly by the city government.

US CITIES FOR COMPARISON: MECHANISMS FOR CHANGING ELECTED OFFICIALS' COMPENSATION

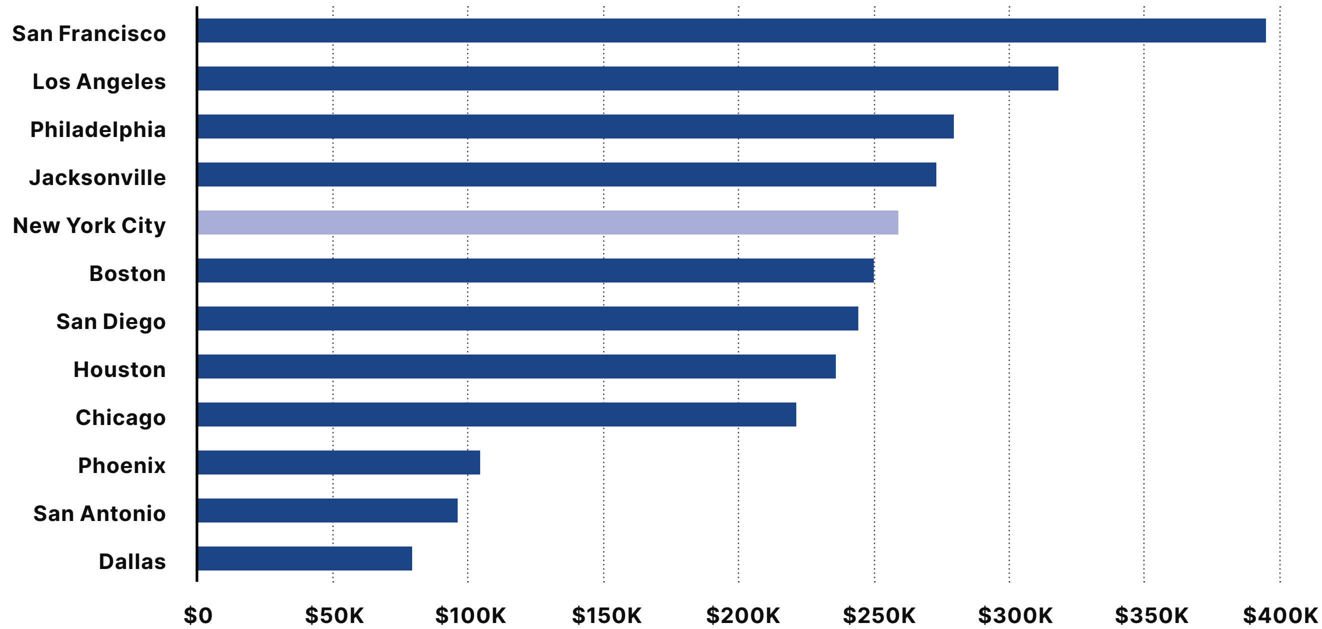
C: Comptroller   CM: Council Member   DA: District Attorney   M: Mayor   PA: Public Advocate   BP: Borough President

City	Position	Mechanism For Changing Compensation	Compensation		Notes
			Set By State	Automatically Adjusted	
Boston	M CM	Changes are recommended by commission, which is legislated to convene every two years. Changes are made by charter amendment. City council proposes and approves changes by legislation.	no	no	
Chicago	M CM	Salaries are adjusted annually by CPI.	no	yes	Tying mayoral salaries to CPI was implemented in 2024. Chicago's mayor chose to decline inflation-based raises 2024-2026.
Dallas	M CM	Salary adjustments are done by charter amendment and approved by ballot measure.	no	no	
Houston	M C CM	Under state law, tied to state District Court Judge salaries. Changes are approved by city council ordinance.	yes	no	
Jacksonville	M CM	Florida sets county salaries, which Jacksonville uses to set city salaries.	yes	yes	Each year, the Office of Economic & Demographic Research (OEDR) conducts a comprehensive study to determine the annual salaries for Elected County Officials throughout the State of Florida.
Los Angeles	M C CM	Salaries are tied to Superior Court Judges, which are set by the state of California. These salaries are increased annually.	not directly	yes	City Council salary is equal to that of a Superior Court Judge, Mayor salary is 30% more than a City Council salary. Controller salary is 10% more than a City Council Member.

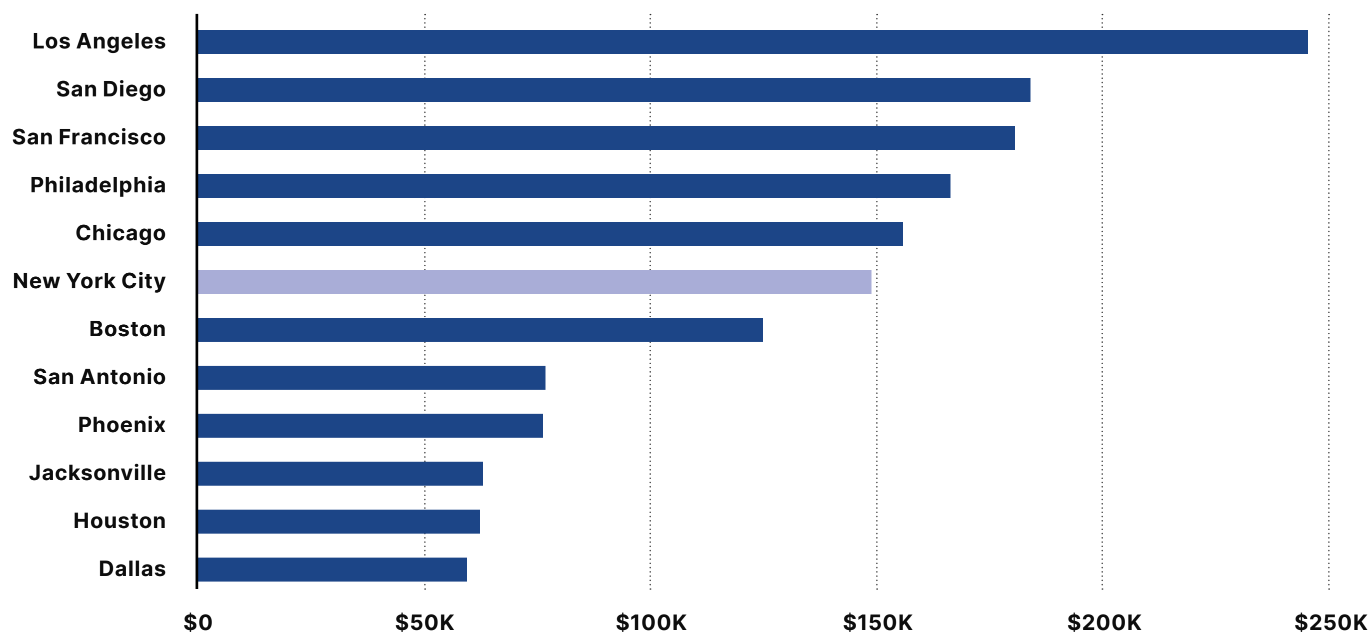
City	Position	Mechanism For Changing Compensation	Compensation		Notes
			Set By State	Automatically Adjusted	
New York	M PA C BP CM	Changes are recommended by Quadrennial Commission, which is legislated to convene every four years. Changes are made by charter amendment. City council proposes and approves changes by legislation.	no	no	
Philadelphia	M C CM	Salaries are adjusted annually by CPI.	no	yes	
Phoenix	M CM	Changes are recommended by Quadrennial Commission, which is legislated to convene every four years. Changes are made by charter amendment, which is approved by ballot measure.	no	no	
San Antonio	M CM	Annual adjustments reflect the United States Housing and Urban Development 4-member household median income for San Antonio.	no	yes	This method was voted on in 2025, and implemented in 2026. Prior to this, salaries had not been adjusted since 2015.
San Diego	M CM	Salaries are tied to Superior Court Judges, which are set by the state of California. These salaries are increased annually.	not directly	yes	Mayoral salary is equal to that of a Superior Court Judge, City council salary is 75% of this amount.
San Francisco	M CM	Salaries are set every five years, and adjusted annually by CPI, by the Civil Service Commission.	no	yes	
District Attorneys					
Boston	DA	Salary is set by the state.	yes	no	
Chicago	DA	Salary is set by the county, but state law also ties the compensation of the Cook County State's Attorney to judicial salaries, ensuring it is not lower than that of a circuit court judge.	yes	no	

City	Position	Mechanism For Changing Compensation	Compensation		Notes
			Set By State	Automatically Adjusted	
Dallas	DA	Salary is set by the state and tied to district judges, with additional pay by years of experience. Counties can also offer supplemental pay.	not directly	no	
Houston	DA	Salary is set by the state and tied to district judges, with additional pay by years of experience. Counties can also offer supplemental pay.	not directly	no	
Jacksonville	DA	Salary is set by the state.	yes	yes	
Los Angeles	DA	Salary is set by county Board of Commissioners.	no	no	
New York	DA	Changes are recommended by Quadrennial Commission, which is legislated to convene every four years. Changes are made by charter amendment. City council proposes and approves changes by legislation. Additionally, salaries are tied to state supreme court judges and adjusted as those salaries change.	not directly	no	
Philadelphia	DA	Tied to the judge of the court of common pleas in the respective judicial district; the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts bases the salary amounts on the increase in the Consumer Price Index in four Mid-Atlantic states.	not directly	yes	A full-time district attorney shall be compensated at one thousand dollars ($1,000) lower than the compensation paid to a judge of the court of common pleas in the respective judicial district.
Phoenix	DA	Salary is set by the state.	no	no	
San Antonio	DA	Salary is set by the state and tied to district judges, with additional pay by years of experience. Counties can also offer supplemental pay.	not directly	no	
San Diego	DA	Salary is annually set to the 75th percentile of comparable counties.	no	yes	

LATEST MAYORAL SALARIES (2025/26)



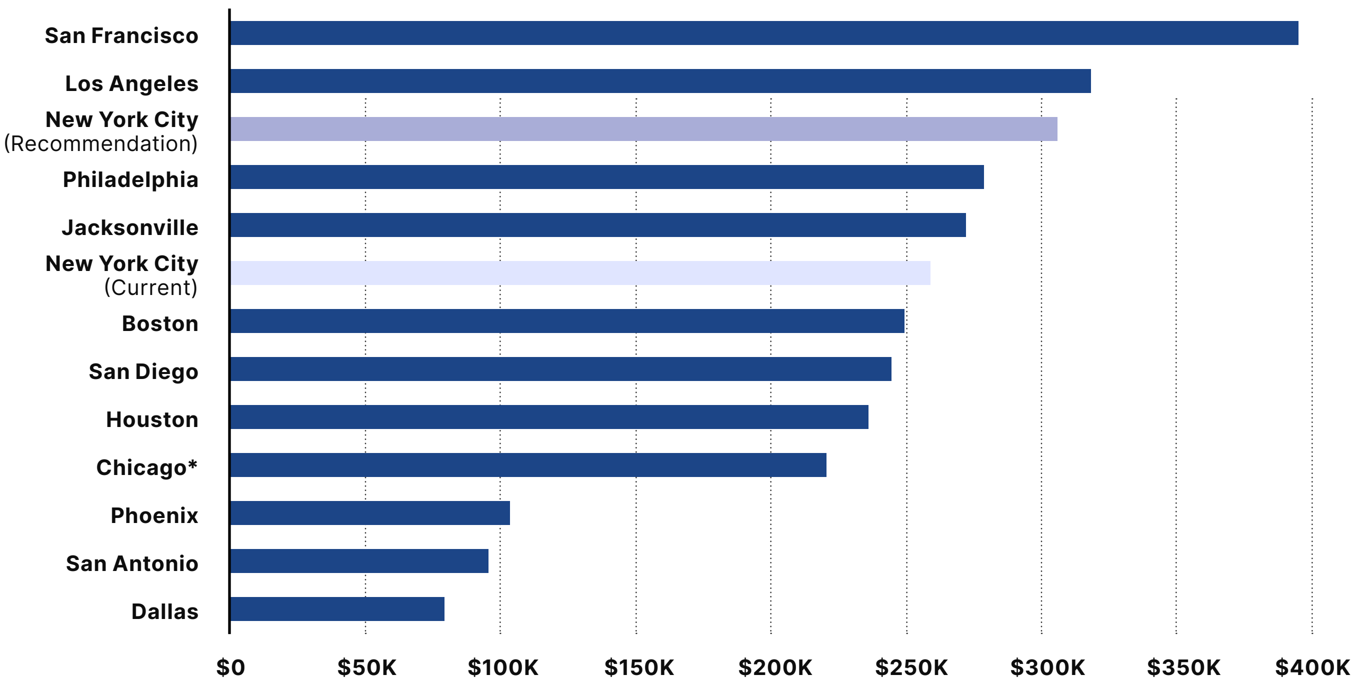
LATEST COUNCIL MEMBER SALARIES (2025/26)



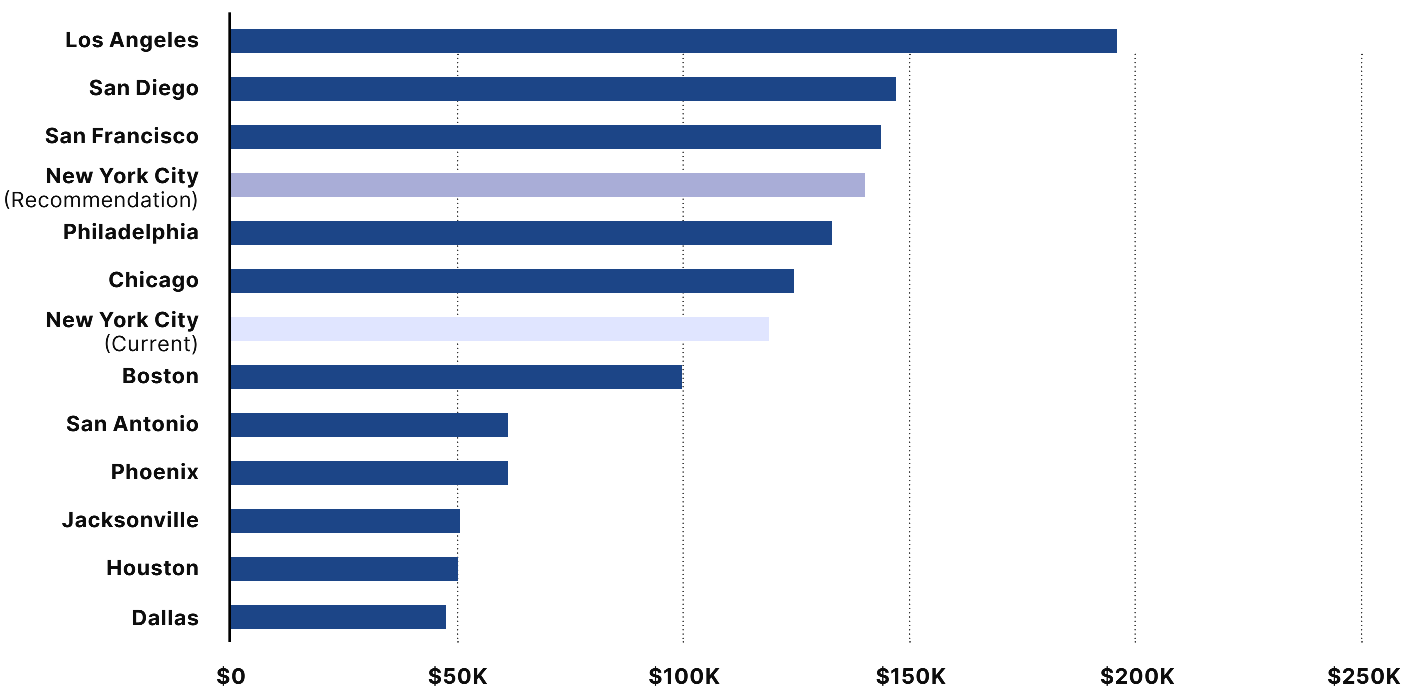
SOURCES: Salary information was sourced from each city. See methodological approach for more information and a list of city-specific links.
NOTES: Dallas, Phoenix, and San Antonio operate with a Council-Manager form of government, in which a City Manager manages most or all of the city's day-to-day operations. Council Members in Houston, Jacksonville, and San Antonio are considered part-time.

US CITIES FOR COMPARISON: NOMINAL MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBER SALARIES-RANKED BY MOST RECENT SALARY

Mayor, 2025/2026



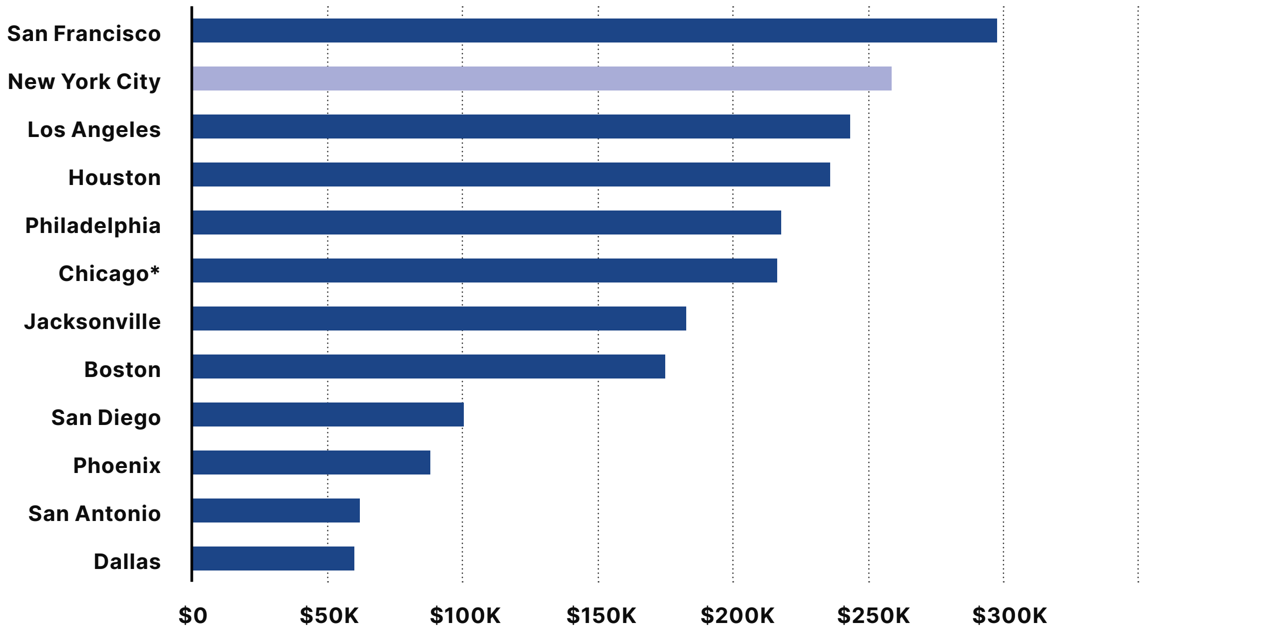
City Council Member, 2025/2026



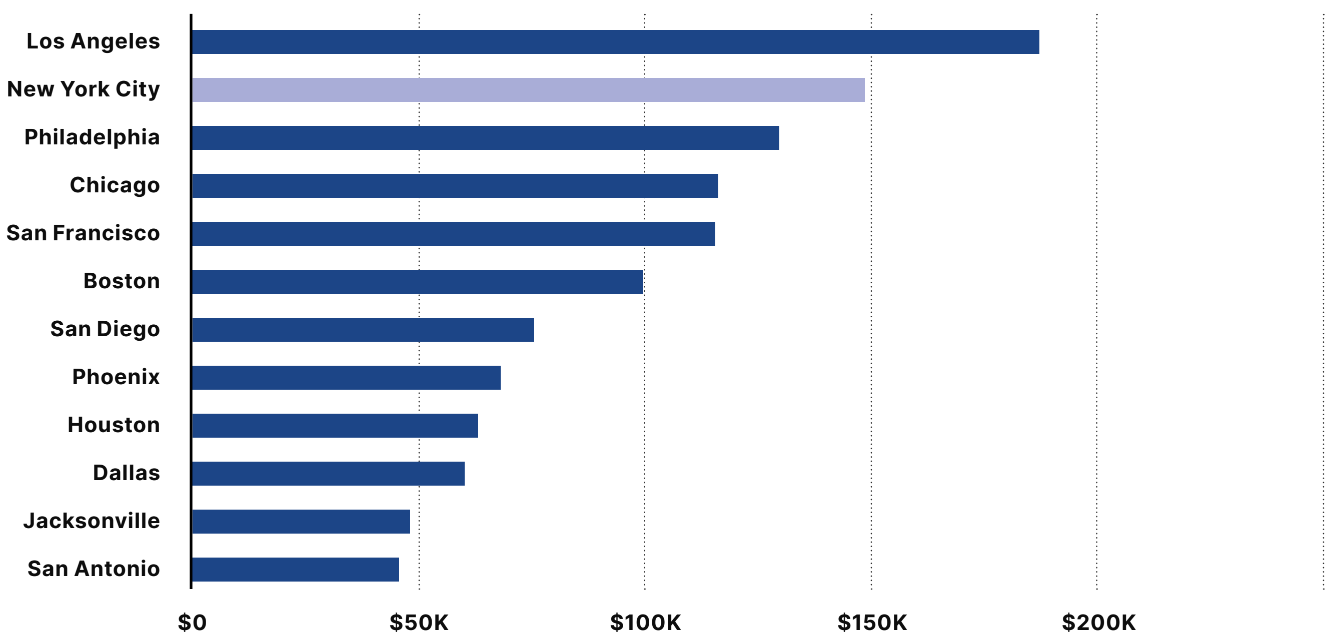
* Chicago's mayor chose to decline inflation-based raises 2024-2026

SOURCES: Salary information was sourced from each city. See methodological approach for more information and a list of city-specific links.
NOTES: Dallas, Phoenix, and San Antonio operate with a Council-Manager form of government, in which a City Manager manages most or all of the city's day-to-day operations. Council Members in Houston, Jacksonville, and San Antonio are considered part-time.

MAYORAL SALARIES (2016)

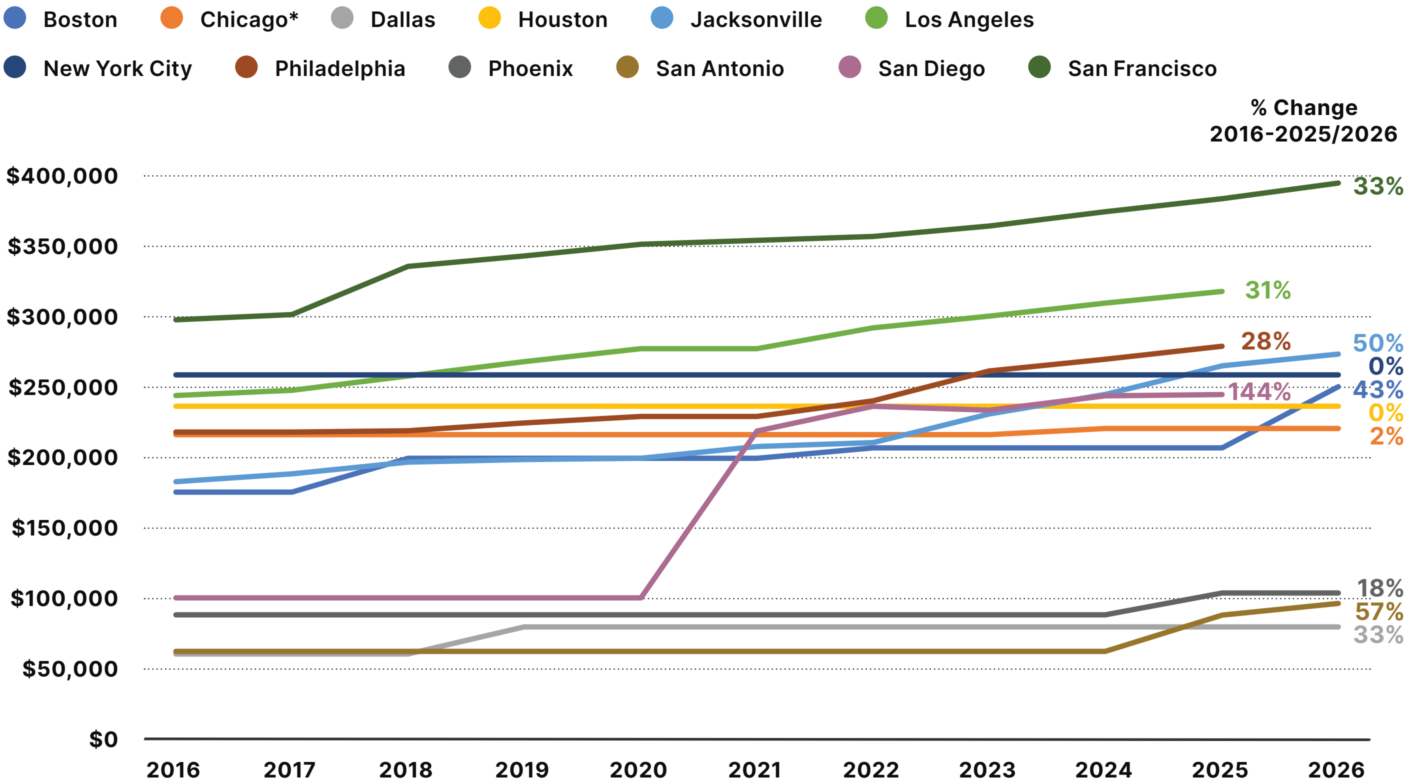


COUNCIL MEMBER SALARIES (2016)



SOURCES: Salary information was sourced from each city. See methodological approach for more information and a list of city-specific links.
NOTES: Dallas, Phoenix, and San Antonio operate with a Council-Manager form of government, in which a City Manager manages most or all of the city's day-to-day operations. Council Members in Houston, Jacksonville, and San Antonio are considered part-time.

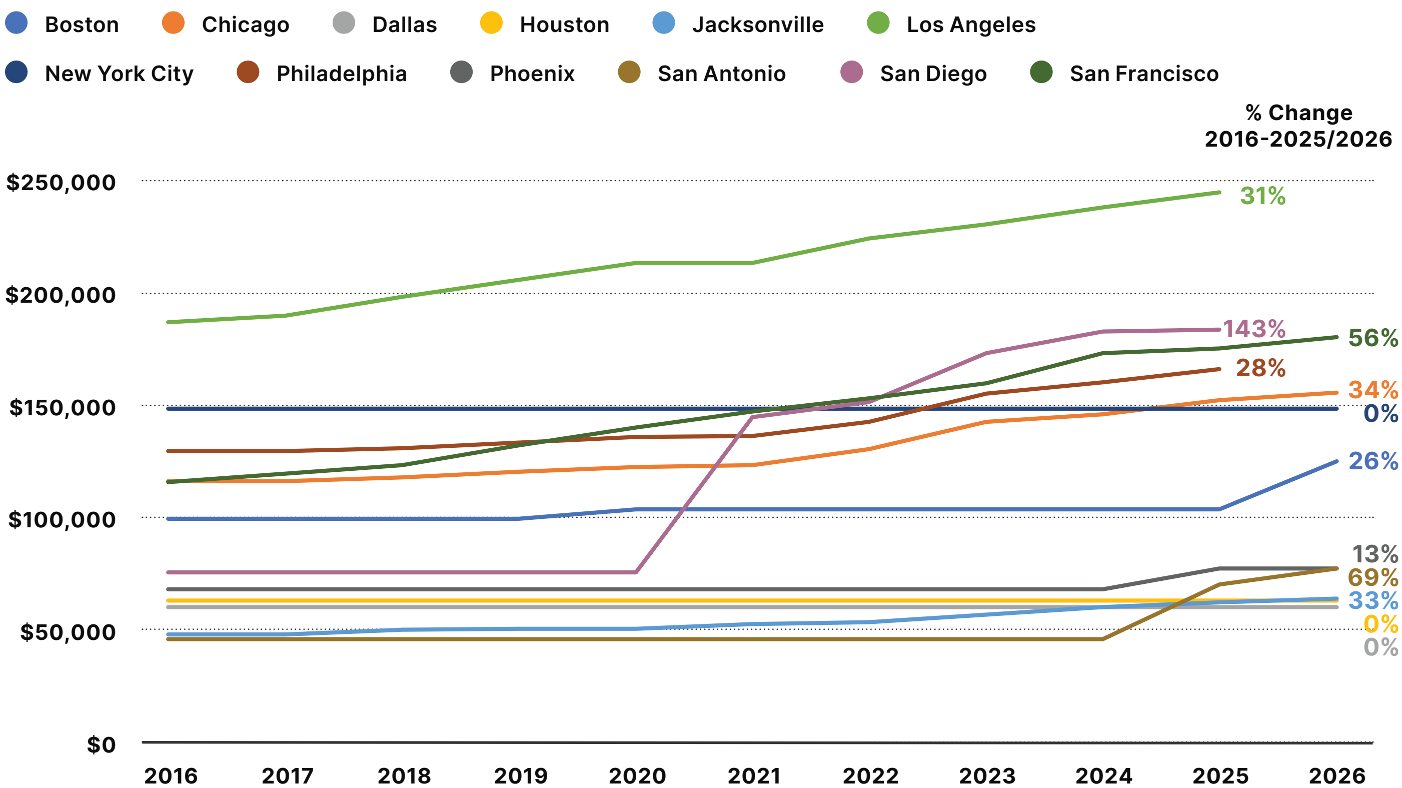
US CITIES FOR COMPARISON: MAYORAL SALARIES OVER TIME



*Chicago's mayor chose to decline inflation-based raises 2024-2026

SOURCES: Salary information was sourced from each city. See methodological approach for more information and a list of city-specific links.
NOTE: Dallas, Phoenix, and San Antonio operate with a Council-Manager form of government, in which a City Manager manages most or all of the city's day-to-day operations.

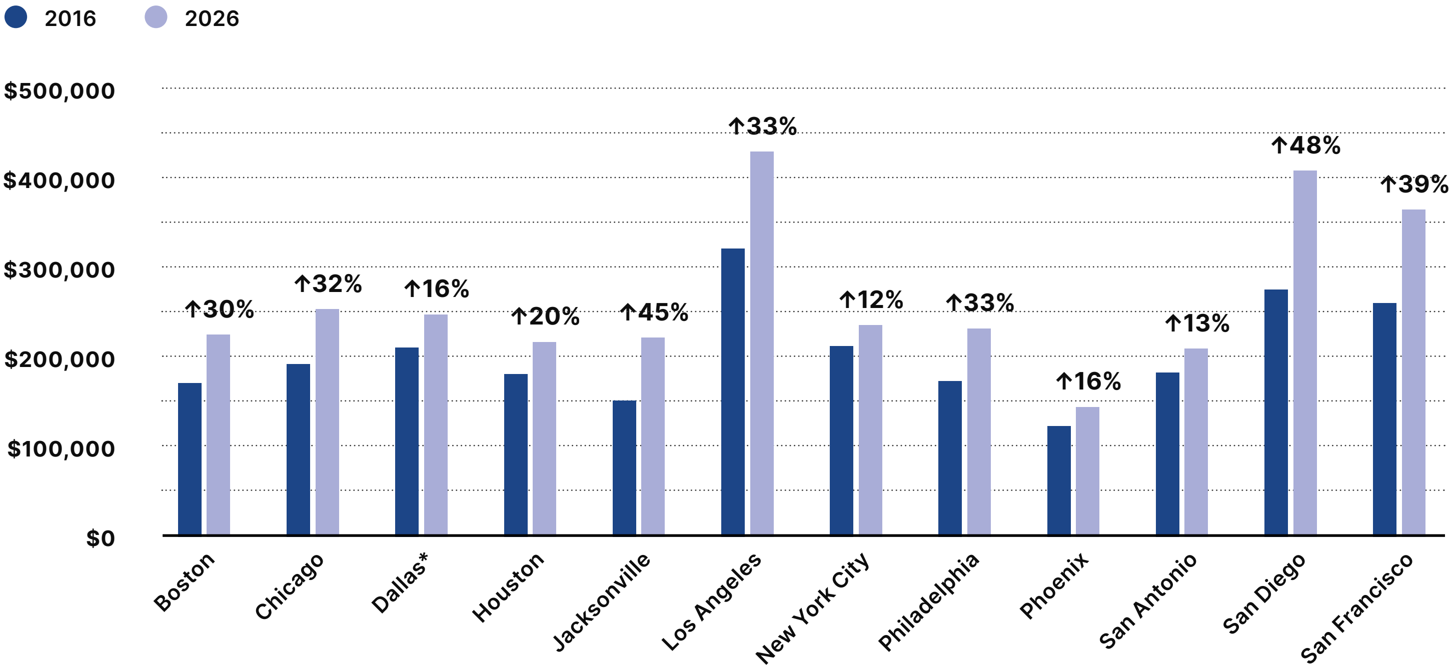
US CITIES FOR COMPARISON: CITY COUNCIL MEMBER SALARIES OVER TIME



SOURCES: Salary information was sourced from each city. See methodological approach for more information and a list of city-specific links.
NOTE: Council Members in Houston, Jacksonville, and San Antonio are considered part-time.

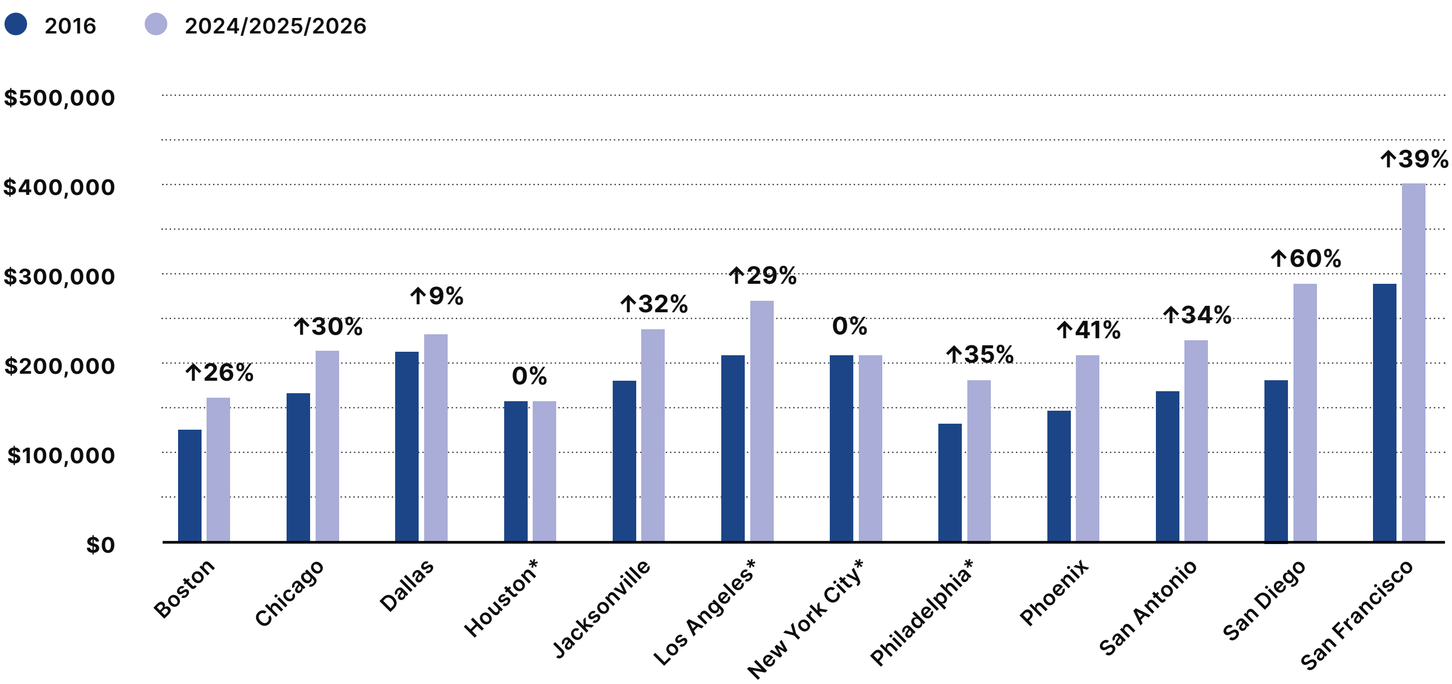
US CITIES FOR COMPARISON: DISTRICT ATTORNEY AND COMPTROLLER SALARIES OVER TIME

District Attorney



*2026 salary is an estimate based on increased in base pay from 2016 salary.

Comptroller



*Comptroller/Controller positions in these cities are elected officials; positions in other cities are not.

SOURCES: Salary information was sourced from each city. See methodological approach for more information and a list of city-specific links.

U.S. CITIES FOR COMPARISON: CONSTITUENCY & JURISDICTION SIZE COMPARISON

Council Members	Number of Members	Population	Average Number Constituents Per Member
Boston	13	673,458	51,804
Chicago	50	2,721,308	54,426
Dallas	14	1,326,087	94,721
Houston	16	2,390,125	149,383
Jacksonville	19	1,009,833	53,149
Los Angeles	15	3,878,704	258,580
New York City	51	8,478,072	166,237
Philadelphia	17	1,573,916	92,583
Phoenix	9	1,673,164	185,907
San Antonio	10	1,526,656	152,666
San Diego	9	1,404,452	156,050
San Francisco	11	827,526	75,230

DA City	DA Jurisdiction	County Population
Boston	Suffolk County District Attorney	791,891
Chicago	Cook County State's Attorney	5,194,625
Dallas	Dallas County District Attorney	2,661,397
Houston	Harris County District Attorney	5,045,026
Jacksonville	Florida State's Attorney - 4th Judicial District	1,409,435
Los Angeles	Los Angeles County District Attorney	9,694,934
New York City	Bronx County	1,406,332
New York City	Kings County	2,653,963
New York City	New York County	1,664,862
New York City	Queens County	2,358,182
New York City	Richmond County	501,290
Philadelphia	Philadelphia District Attorney	1,574,281
Phoenix	Maricopa County District Attorney	4,689,558
San Antonio	Bexar County District Attorney	2,160,088
San Diego	San Diego County District Attorney	3,282,248
San Francisco	San Francisco County District Attorney	826,079

SOURCES: See methodological approach for more information and a list of city-specific links.

NOTE: Council Members in Houston, Jacksonville, and San Antonio are considered part-time.

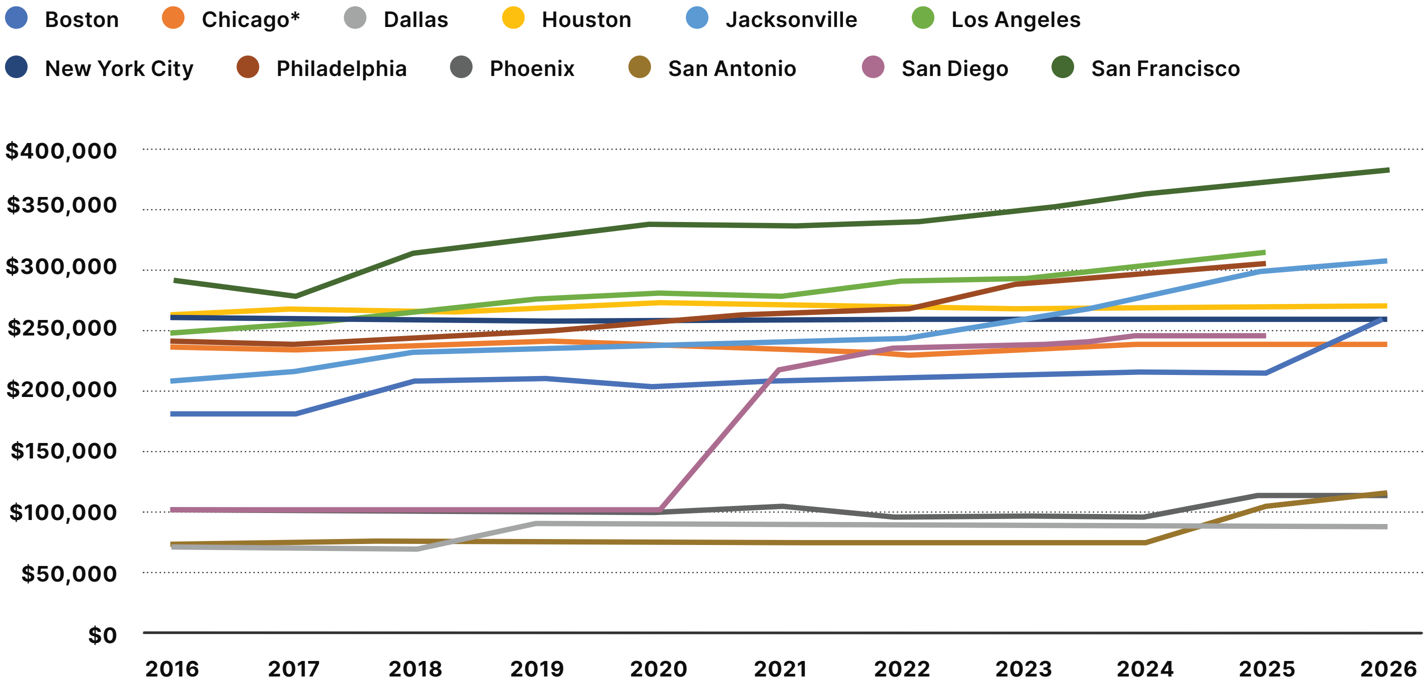
US CITIES FOR COMPARISON: REGIONAL PRICE PARITIES

	Regional Price Parities									
Metropolitan Statistical Area	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Change, 2016 to 2024
Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	110.1	109.1	110.3	109.9	112.5	109.8	112.2	110.4	108.3	-1.71%
Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN	103.8	105.2	104.2	102.6	104.5	105.5	105.7	102.5	103.6	-0.19%
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	98.0	99.7	101.1	103.4	104.5	104.0	103.4	102.5	103.1	5.15%
Houston-Pasadena-The Woodlands, TX	102.4	100.0	101.9	101.4	100.0	99.7	98.8	99.7	98.6	-3.64%
Jacksonville, FL	99.3	98.7	97.0	95.9	96.4	98.7	98.5	99.6	99.5	0.16%
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	111.3	110.2	111.0	110.9	113.9	114.2	113.3	114.7	113.6	2.07%
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ	113.7	113.6	114.5	114.9	115.6	114.8	113.0	112.6	112.6	-1.01%
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	102.5	104.0	103.2	103.7	102.3	99.0	100.7	102.4	102.6	0.02%
Phoenix-Mesa-Chandler, AZ	100.4	98.9	99.6	100.0	102.8	99.1	103.9	104.7	103.3	2.88%
San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX	98.3	97.1	95.5	95.8	96.8	96.2	95.0	94.3	94.7	-3.61%
San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad, CA	113.6	112.3	112.6	113.5	115.1	115.1	114.6	110.7	111.9	-1.52%
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA	116.4	121.6	122.3	119.7	119.6	120.0	118.0	117.6	115.6	-0.67%

SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, "MARPP Regional price parities by MSA" (accessed Sunday, May 31, 2026).

NOTES: Regional Price Parities (RPPs) from the BEA measure the differences in price levels across metropolitan statistical areas relative to the national average (set to 100). This measure is only available at the MSA-level, not for cities. For example, if New York's RPP is 112, that means it's cost of living is 12% higher than the national average.

US CITIES FOR COMPARISON: MAYORAL SALARIES ADJUSTED FOR COST OF LIVING

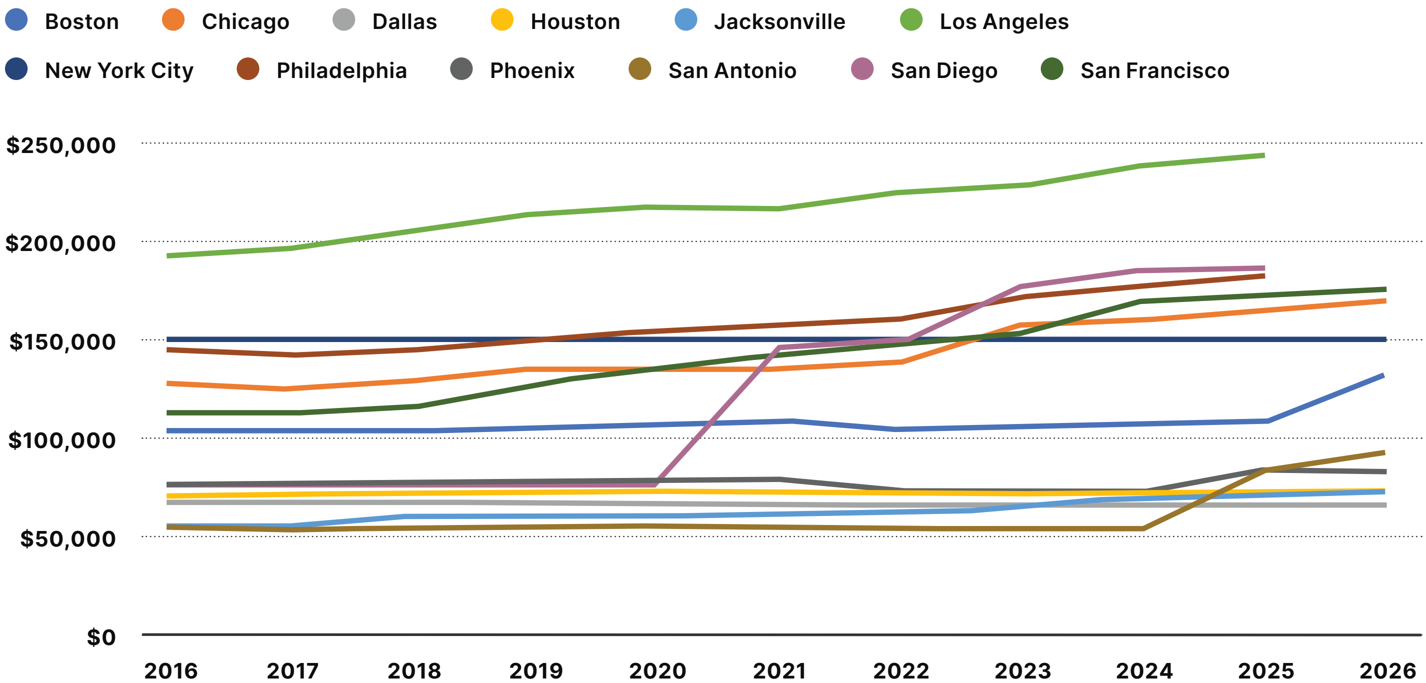


*Chicago's mayor chose to decline inflation-based raises 2024-2026.

SOURCES: Salary information was sourced from each city. See methodological approach for more information and a list of city-specific links. Cost of living adjustment utilized the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis's MARPP Regional price parities by MSA.

NOTE: Dallas, Phoenix, and San Antonio operate with a Council-Manager form of government, in which a City Manager manages most or all of the city's day-to-day operations.

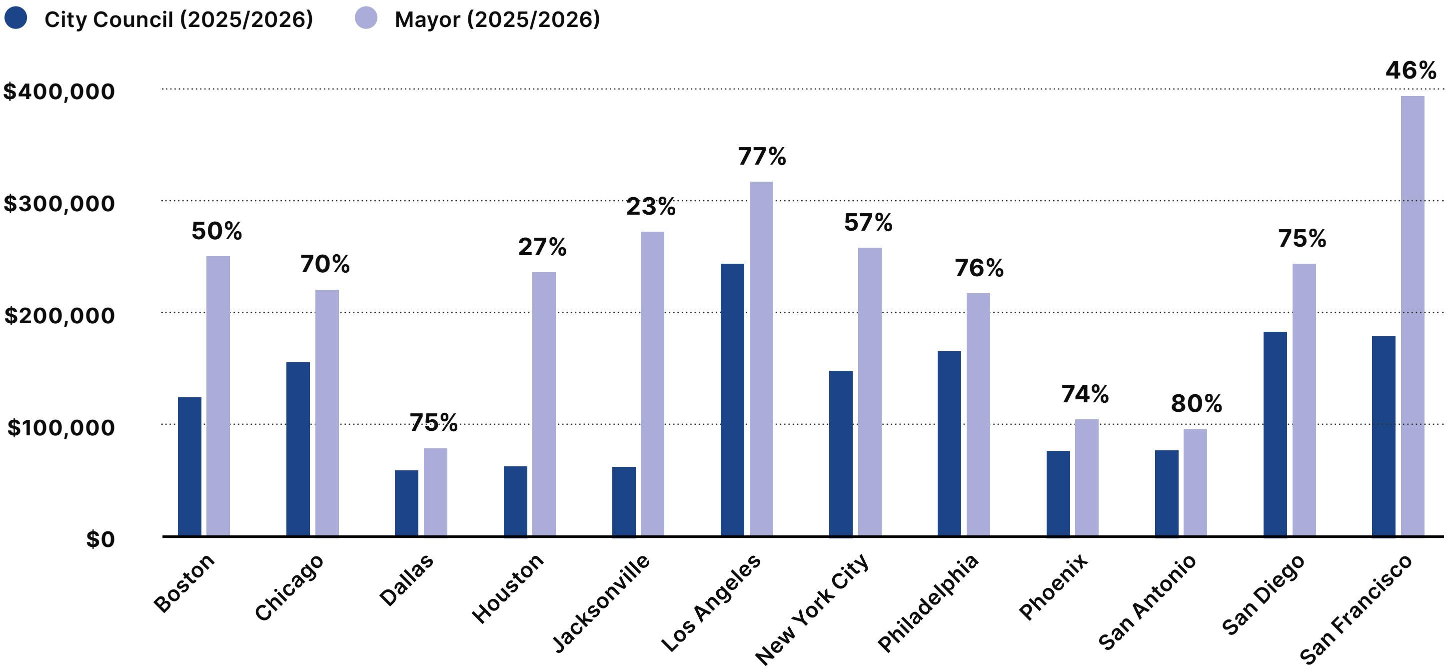
US CITIES FOR COMPARISON: CITY COUNCIL SALARIES ADJUSTED FOR COST OF LIVING



SOURCES: Salary information was sourced from each city. See methodological approach for more information and a list of city-specific links. Cost of living adjustment utilized the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis's MARPP Regional price parities by MSA.

NOTE: Council Members in Houston, Jacksonville, and San Antonio are considered part-time.

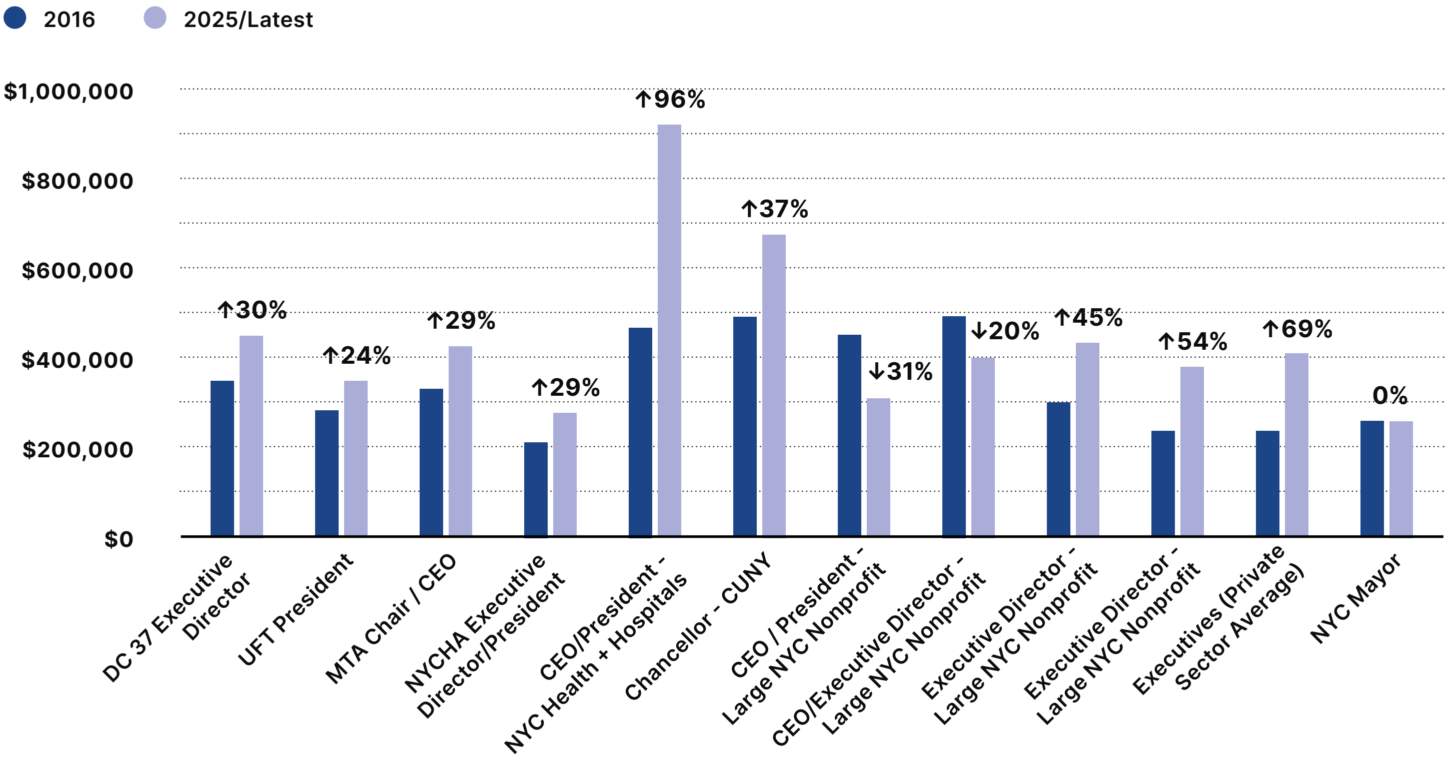
US CITIES FOR COMPARISON: COUNCIL MEMBER SALARY AS A PERCENTAGE OF MAYOR SALARY



SOURCES: Salary information was sourced from each city. See methodological approach for more information and a list of city-specific links. Cost of living adjustment utilized the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis's MARPP Regional price parities by MSA.

NOTES: Labels are Council Member salary as a percentage of mayor salary. Dallas, Phoenix, and San Antonio operate with a Council-Manager form of government, in which a City Manager manages most or all of the city's day-to-day operations. Council Members in Houston, Jacksonville, and San Antonio are considered part-time.

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION



SOURCES: ProPublica Nonprofit Explorer; SeeThroughNY; US Bureau of Labor Statistics
NOTES: This is a selection of nonprofit and public sector executives.

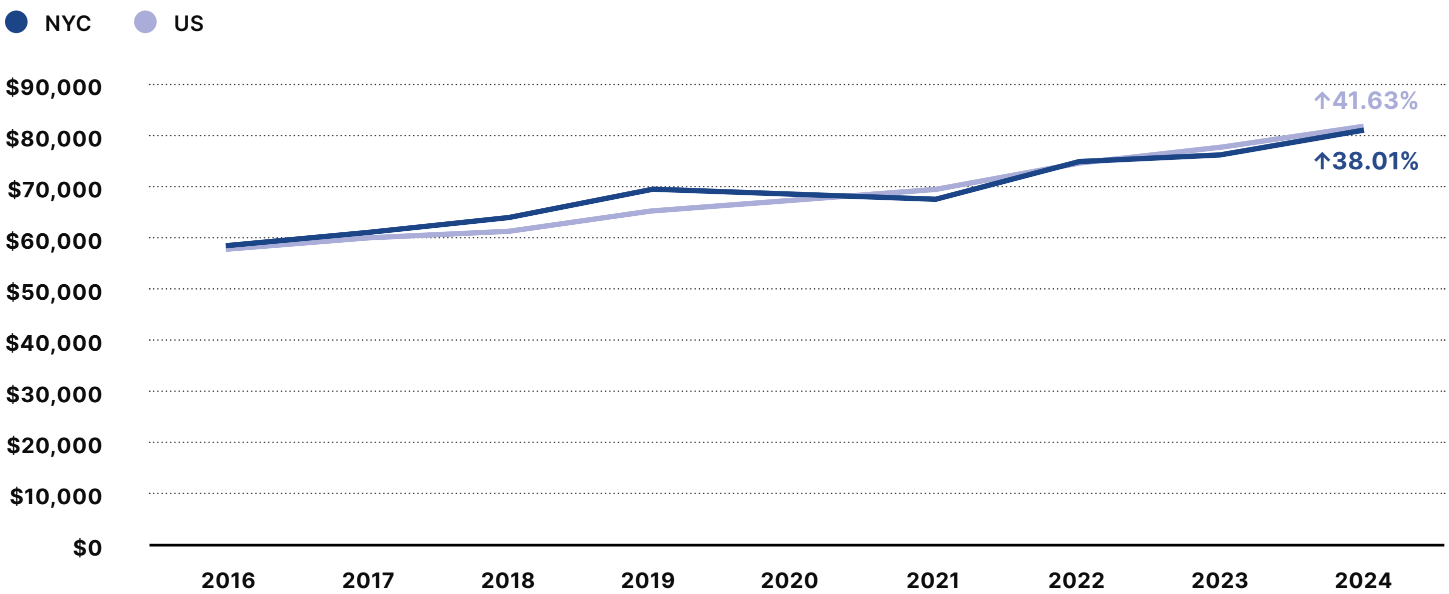
NEW YORK STATE OFFICIALS' SALARIES

Office	2016 Salary	2026 Salary	Percent Change, 2016 to 2026	Annualized Percent Change, 2016 to 2026
Governor	$179,000	$250,000	39.70%	3.97%
Attorney General	$151,500	$220,000	45.20%	4.52%
Comptroller	$151,500	$220,000	45.20%	4.52%
State Legislator (Assembly + Senate)	$79,500	$142,000	78.60%	7.86%

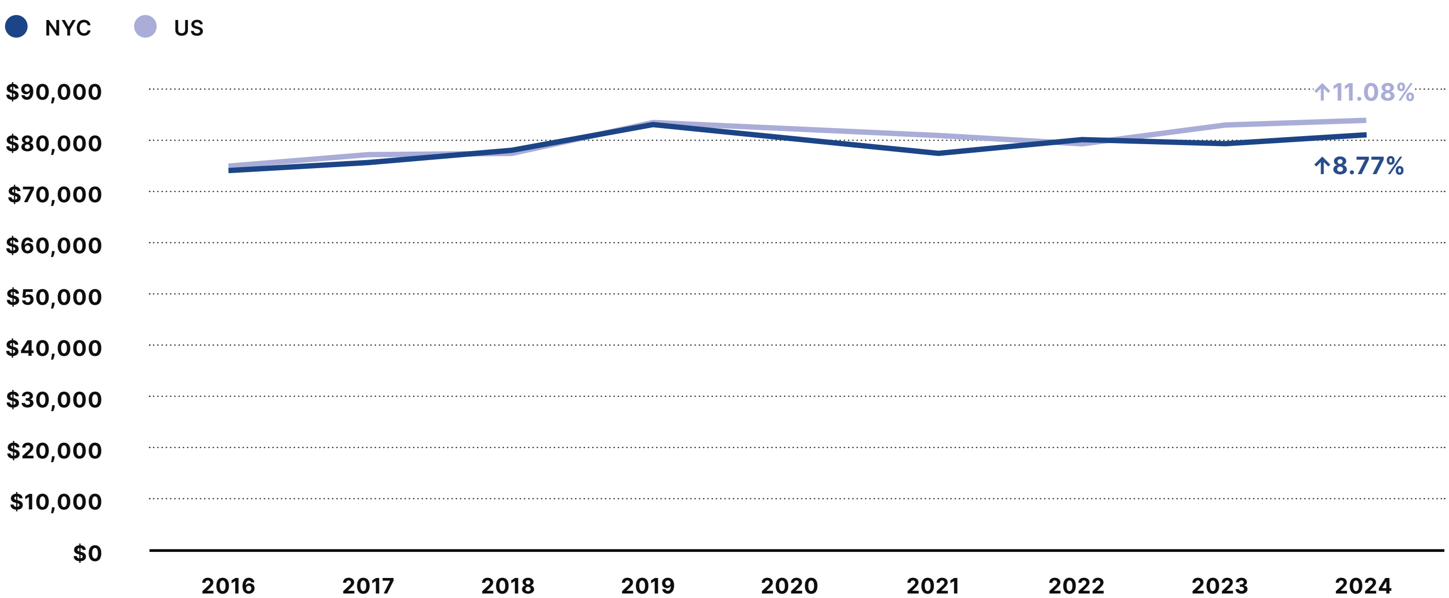
SOURCE: New York State Division of the Budget

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Nominal

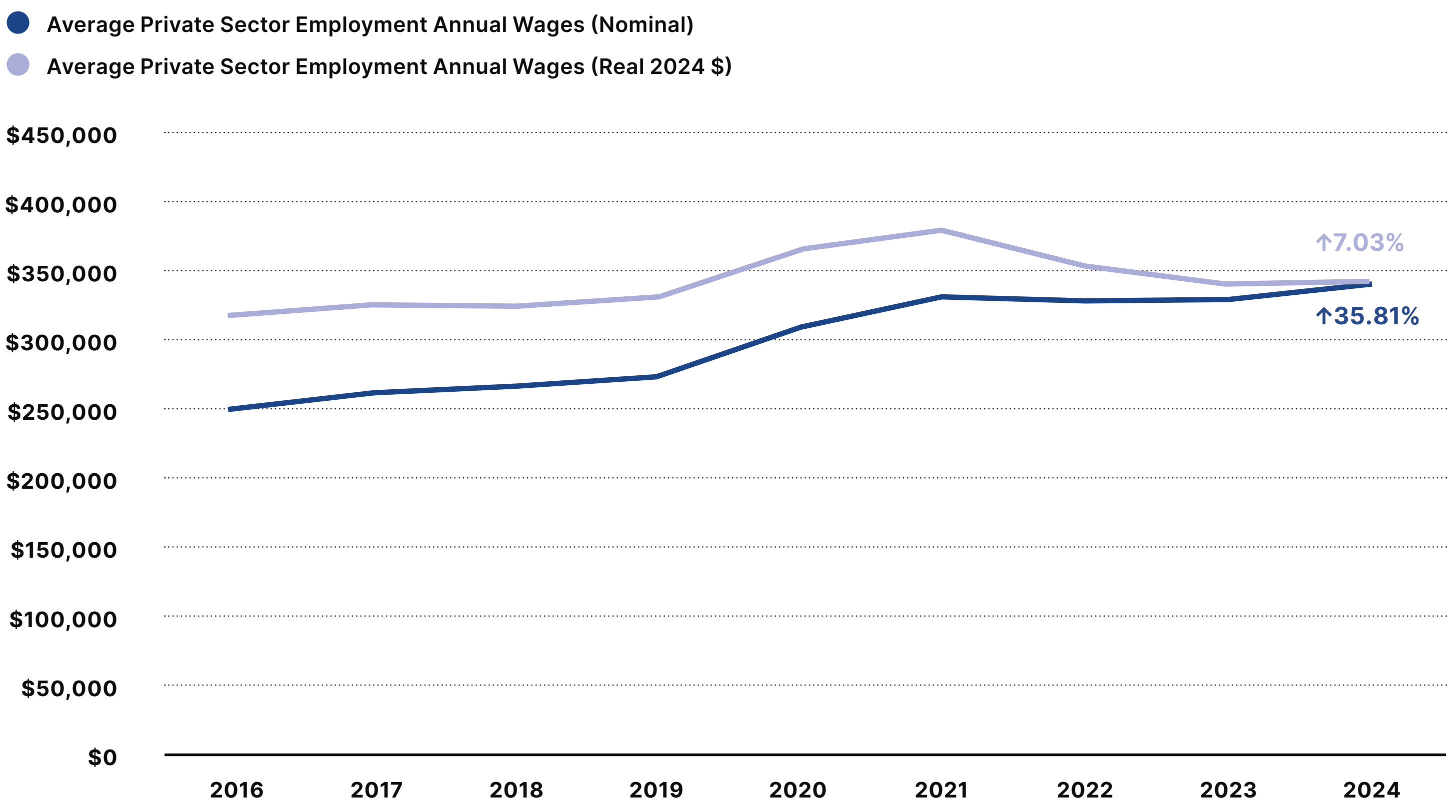


Real (2024 $)



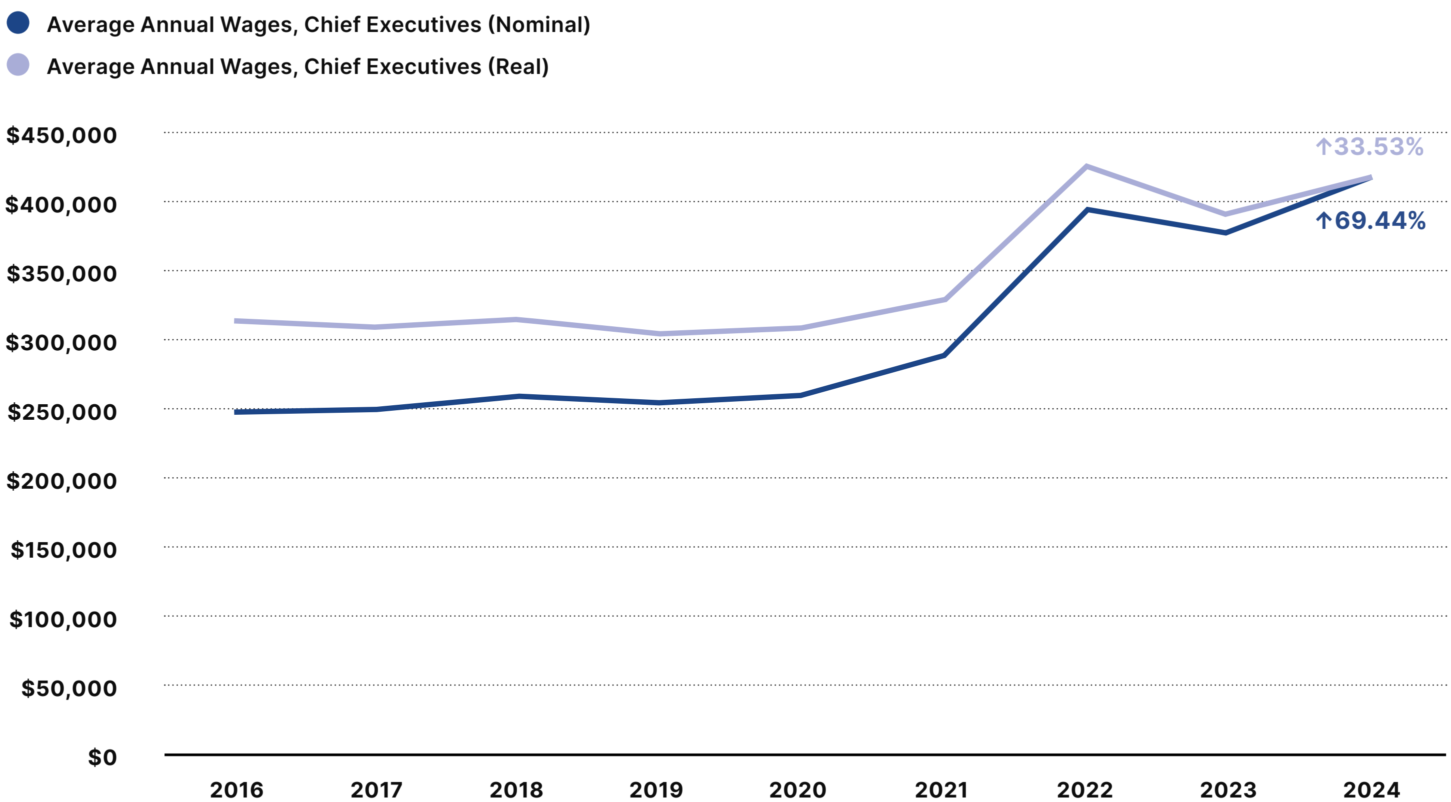
SOURCES: Median household income in the past 12 months: 2024 American Community Survey 1-year estimates (Table B19013); U.S. Census Bureau. (2024).
NOTES: This is the nominal and real Median Household Income for the New York City and the U.S. ACS 1-year estimates are not available for 2020.

PRIVATE SECTOR WAGES, NEW YORK CITY



SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Quarterly census of employment and wages. U.S. Department of Labor.
NOTES: Data uses the New York City labor market geography and allows for differentiation between private and public sector. This is all private sector employment.

AVERAGE CHIEF EXECUTIVE WAGES, NEW YORK CITY METRO AREA



SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2025, April). Occupational employment and wage statistics: Metropolitan area cross-industry estimates. U.S. Department of Labor.

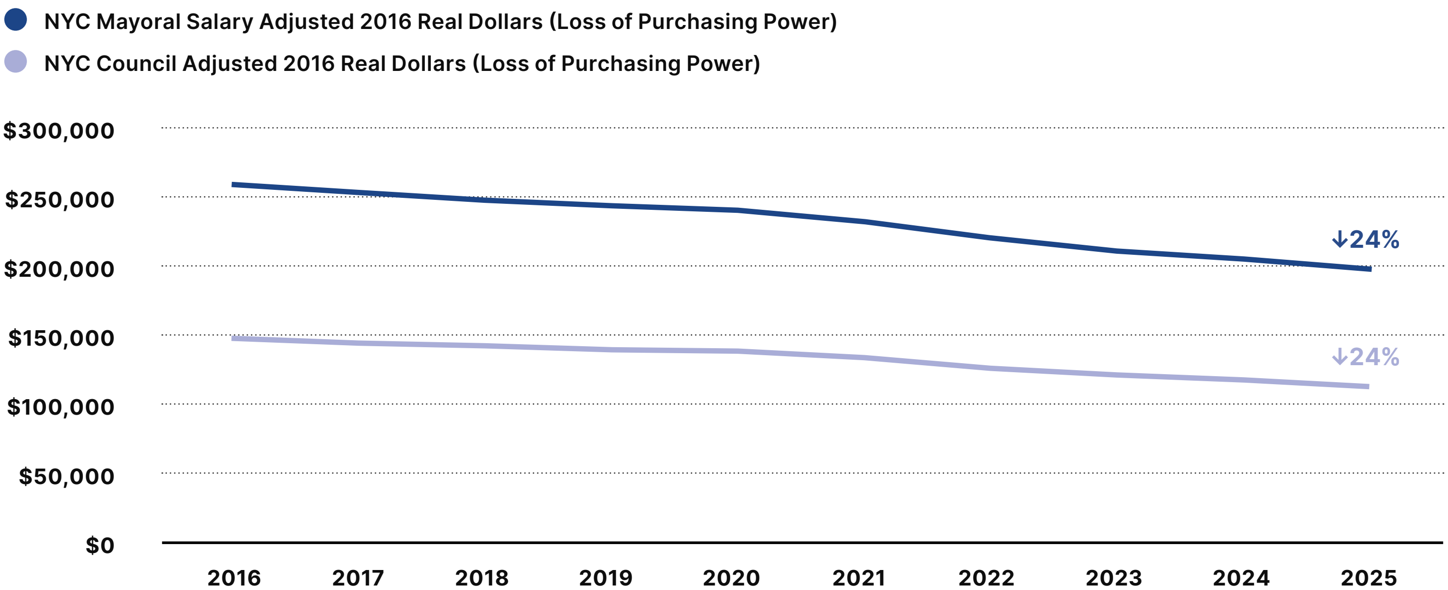
NOTES: Data is available at the MSA-level and does not distinguish between private and public sector wages.

DC37 WAGE INCREASES, 2011 TO 2025

EFFECTIVE RAISE DATE	% INCREASE	AGREEMENT YEAR	NOTE
9/3/2011	1%	7/1/2014	Retroactive to 2011, $1000 ratification bonus
9/3/2012	1%	7/1/2014	
9/3/2013	1%	7/1/2014	
9/3/2014	1.50%	7/1/2014	
9/3/2015	2.50%	7/1/2014	
9/3/2016	3%	7/1/2014	
9/26/2017	2%	6/25/18	Retroactive to Sept 2017
9/26/2018	2.25%	6/25/18	
10/26/2019	3%	6/25/18	
5/26/2021	3%	2/16/23	Retroactive to May 2021, $3,000 ratification payment
5/26/2022	3%	2/16/23	
5/26/2023	3%	2/16/23	
5/26/2024	3%	2/16/23	
5/26/2025	3.25%	2/16/23	
TOTAL COMPOUNDED INCREASE SINCE 2016	**28.58%**		

SOURCE: NYC DC37 MOUs

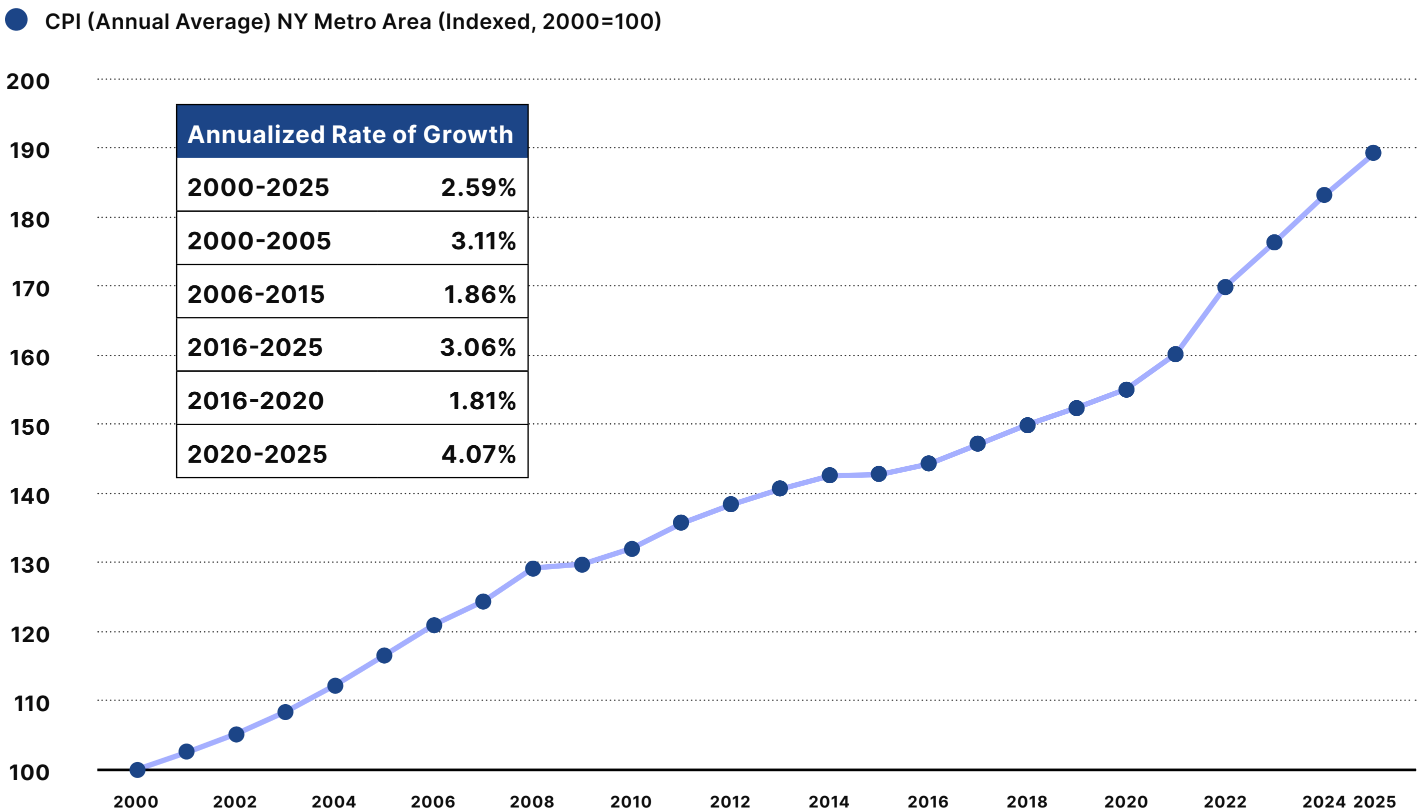
LOSS OF PURCHASING POWER FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS' COMPENSATION, 2016 TO 2025



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (CBSA)

NOTE: By adjusting the nominal salary to 2016 real dollars (the year where current salaries were set) you can see the loss in purchasing power.

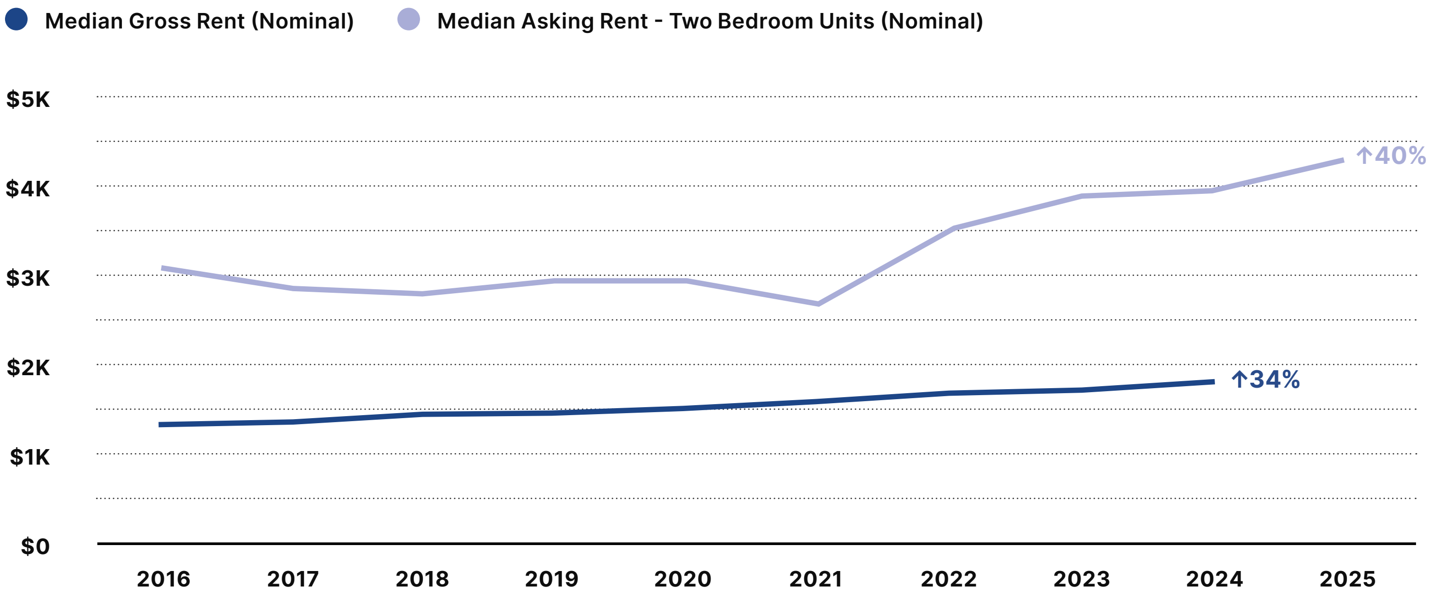
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI)



Annualized Rate of Growth	
2000-2025	2.59%
2000-2005	3.11%
2006-2015	1.86%
2016-2025	3.06%
2016-2020	1.81%
2020-2025	4.07%

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (CBSA)
NOTES: Data represents the average annual Consumer Price Index for the NY Metropolitan Area and is indexed to 100 at 2000. This table also presents year over year percent change. Data limitations: 2025 average is missing October due to appropriations lapse, and 2026 average is based on only January-April.

RENT, NEW YORK CITY



SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2024 1-year estimates. Table B25064: Median Gross Rent, New York City. Accessed via data.census.gov.; StreetEasy. (2025). Median Asking Price for Two-Bedroom Apartments, New York City. StreetEasy Data Dashboard. https://streeteasy.com
NOTES: ACS 1-year estimate is missing for 2020, so 2019 number is filled in. Median Gross Rent includes all apartment types, including subsidized housing. Median Asking Rent reflects rents for two bedroom apartments listed on StreetEasy and captures the price of entering the rental market.

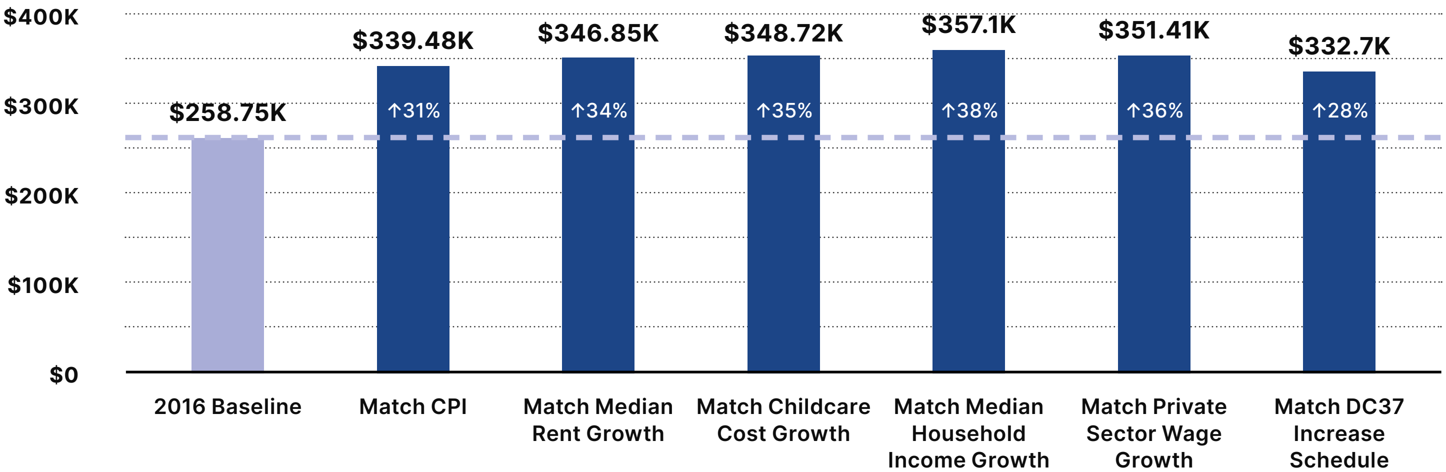
TRUE COST OF LIVING, NEW YORK CITY

Family Type (Adults under Age 65)	Median Costs	Median Resources
One Adult No Children	$70,334	$57,680
One Adult 1 Child	$97,527	$66,026
One Adult 2 Children	$114,108	$67,701
One Adult 3+ Children	$138,235	$73,765
One Adult 1+ Children	$114,568	$68,500
Two Adults No Children	$131,993	$133,089
Two+ Adults 1 Child	$147,522	$130,449
Two+ Adults 2 Children	$166,279	$141,449
Two+ Adults 3+ Children	$186,554	$138,243
Two+ Adults 1+ Children	$166,034	$136,766

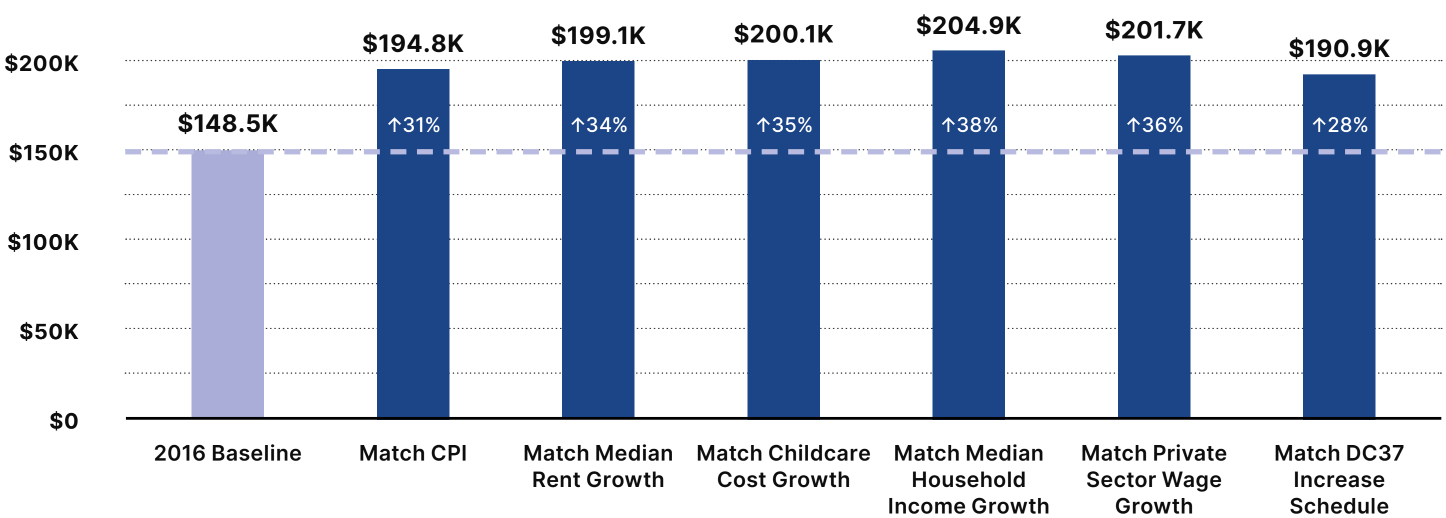
SOURCE: NYC Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice, Urban Institute, & NYC Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity. (2026). NYC true cost of living measure: Inaugural report — measuring what New Yorkers need to live with dignity. City of New York. https://www.nyc.gov/assets/equity/downloads/pdf/2026%20NYC%20TCOL%20Measure_4%206%2026.pdf. Table Source: Urban Institute, applying the ATTIS model to the 2018 American Community Survey, IPUMS USA, projected to 2022.

ELECTED OFFICIALS' COMPENSATION RELATIVE TO OTHER BENCHMARKS

Mayor Salary If Compensation Kept Up with Nominal Growth of Other Benchmarks

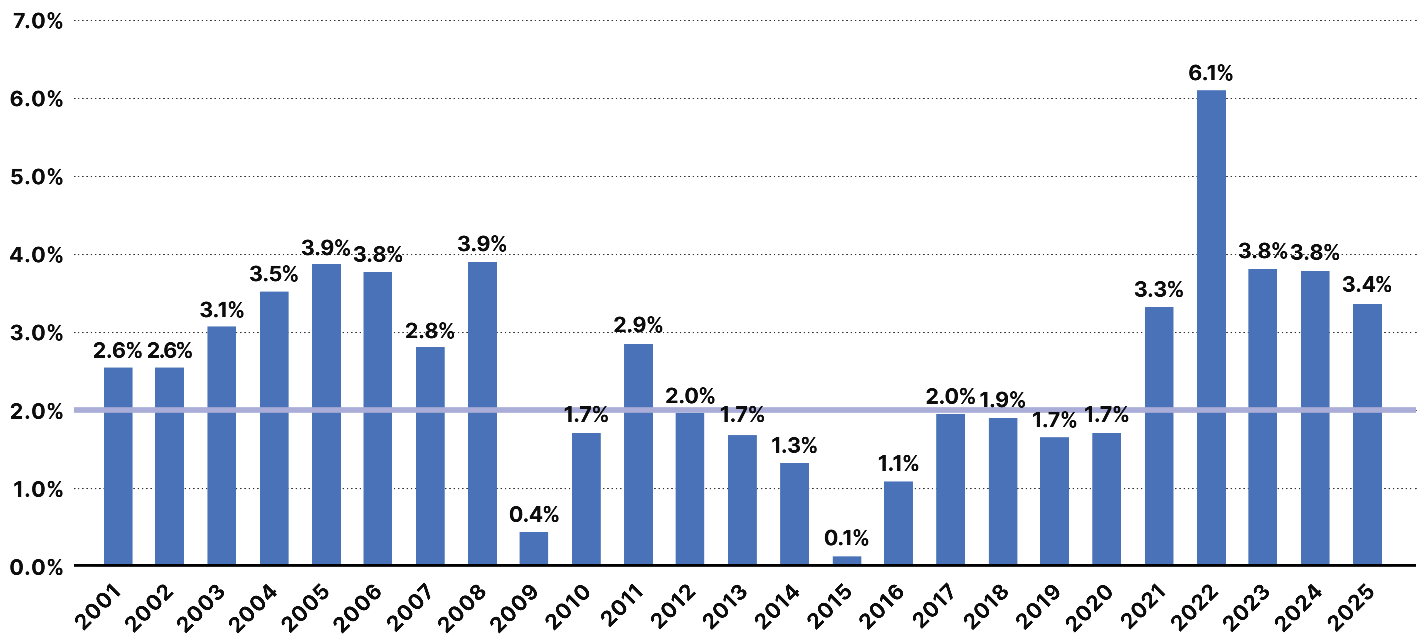


City Council Salary If Compensation Kept Up with Nominal Growth of Other Benchmarks



SOURCE: U.S Census Bureau, ACS 1-year Estimates; Bureau of Labor Statistics; and other sources (see full methodology)
NOTES: This table provides a summary of nominal growth in cost of living indicators along with projected mayoral and city council salaries if they had had the same nominal growth as the cost of living indicators. Based on the data sources available for each cost of living metric, data is available through 2024 or 2025.

CPI YEAR-OVER-YEAR PERCENT CHANGE, 2001 TO 2025



SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (CBSA)
NOTE: Data represents the year over year percent change in the average annual Consumer Price Index for the NY Metropolitan Area and is indexed to 100 at 2000. Data limitations: 2025 average is missing October due to appropriations lapse.

CITIZENS UNION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Testimony before the City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Preconsidered T2026-2196 (Williams): Compensation of the mayor, public advocate, members of the city council, borough presidents, comptroller, and district attorneys

250 Broadway – July 7, 2026

Good morning, Council Members. My name is Grace Rauh, and I am the Executive Director of Citizens Union, a nonpartisan good government group that has worked to advance honest and accountable government and open and fair elections in New York for nearly 130 years.

We supported the establishment of the 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission through both advocacy and testimony because we believe periodic reviews of elected officials' compensation are essential to good government, and because the ten-year salary freeze was unsustainable.

We thank the Council for incorporating nearly all of the Commission's recommendations – including most of our recommendations to the Commission – into the proposed bill, Preconsidered T2026-2196, and for bringing it to a public hearing today.

We support the bill but are concerned about the proposed automatic inflation-adjusted salary increases as a backstop when a commission is not convened. This testimony details our views on each of the bill's elements.

Increase all elected officials' salaries by 18.2%

SUPPORT

Citizens Union's longstanding position is that elected officials should be well compensated. Competitive salaries attract strong candidates, enable individuals who are not independently wealthy to pursue public service, reduce incentives for corruption, and signal the importance of public service. The proposed increase reflects those goals, and we support it.

Restore the Quadrennial Advisory Commission cycle to the third year of the term, with the next commission to be established in 2028 (Admin Code § 3-601(a))

SUPPORT. *Citizens Union recommended this reform to the Quadrennial Commission.*

To ensure a Quadrennial Advisory Commission is established in 2026 – the first time in more than ten years - the Council moved the legal commission cycle to the first year of a mayoral term. But keeping that cycle creates a practical and political risk for future commissions, since a newly inaugurated mayor may lack the time, capacity, or political incentive to initiate a review of elected officials' salaries within 15 days of taking office.

Shifting the cycle back to the third year of the term, as the Commission recommended, makes it more likely that commissions will be established and reinforces the principle that compensation changes should be prospective.

Codify prospective salary recommendations (Admin Code § 3-601(b))

SUPPORT. *Citizens Union recommended this reform to the Quadrennial Commission.*

The proposed bill adopts the Commission's recommendation that future salary adjustments take effect during the first year of the next term of office. Citizens Union has long supported prospective salary adjustments so that elected officials cannot immediately benefit from raises they approve themselves, consistent with similar principles found in the U.S. and New York State Constitutions.

Extend the Commission's timeframe from 75 to 120 days (Admin code § 3-601(c))

SUPPORT. *Citizens Union recommended this reform to the Quadrennial Commission.*

Both the 2015 and 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commissions concluded that the current 75-day review period is too short and recommended extending it. The Commission's work requires reviewing extensive data, evaluating qualitative aspects of each elected office, securing administrative support from city agencies or outside organizations, and seeking meaningful public input and deliberation. Commissioners typically maintain other professional responsibilities while serving. Extending the review period to 120 days would provide adequate time for analysis, public engagement, and deliberation, resulting in better-informed recommendations.

Establish automatic inflation-adjusted salary increases if no Commission is convened (Admin code § 3-601(i))

OPPOSE

Citizens Union does not recommend adopting the backstop mechanism proposed by the Commission and incorporated into this bill - an automatic inflation-adjusted salary increase, capped at 8.25 percent every four years, taking effect on the first year or a mayor's terms if no Commission was convened in the previous four years.

We fully support establishing a mechanism that ensures that Quadrennial Advisory Commissions are convened in a timely manner and prevents another decade-long salary freeze. We have repeatedly called for such reform before the Council, the Commission, in the press, and through other forms of advocacy.[1]

However**, we are concerned that the proposed approach would effectively eliminate the incentive to convene quadrennial advisory commissions in the future.**

Although Commission said its proposal is not intended to become an automatic, inflation-based cost-of-living adjustment like those used in Chicago and Philadelphia, [2] in practice, the result may be the same. Mayors and City Councils may prefer to avoid the political sensitivity of convening a pay commission and voting on compensation increases and instead allow the automatic CPI adjustment to take effect.

But **a Commission-based review process is preferable to an automatic adjustment** for two principled reasons.

First, salary reviews involve qualitative considerations that cannot be captured through an inflation adjustment alone. These include whether the responsibilities of an office have changed over time (for example, the 2015 Commission concluded that City Council Members should be treated as full-time officials); whether certain offices warrant different adjustments than others (every prior commission recommended different increases for different offices); how salaries compare with analogous public positions (e.g.

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[1] See January 30 2026 testimony on legislation establishing a one-time compensation commission https://citizensunion.org/document/2026-01-30/testimony-in-support-of-council-legislation-establishing-a-one-time-compensation-commission/; March 10, 2026 statement - Citizens Union Commends City Council for Advancing Compensation Review Through Independent Commission, Says Bill Leaves Mayoral Appointment Loophole Unresolved https://citizensunion.org/document/2026-03-10/citizens-union-commends-city-council-for-advancing-compensation-review-through-independent-commission-says-bill-leaves-mayoral-appointment-loophole-unresolved; May 21, 2026 testimony to the 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission https://citizensunion.org/document/2026-05-21/testimony-to-the-2026-new-york-city-quadrennial-advisory-commission

[2] See footnote 54, page 24, The 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission Final Report https://www.nyc.gov/assets/quadrennial/downloads/pdf/Quadrennial_Commission_Report_21.pdf

district attorneys and the Corporation Counsel; City Comptroller and commissioners of large agencies); the overall economic and fiscal climate and the public perception (For example, the 2020 New York State Commission on Legislative, Judicial, and Executive Compensation recommended no salary increases because of the COVID-19 pandemic); and the public perception of a task hike.

These considerations help explain why **no public servant in New York City or New York State receive guaranteed automatic salary increases.**

Second, pay commissions serve as vehicles for broader institutional reform, not merely salary recommendations. The 2015 Commission's recommendations resulted in the ban on outside earned income, the elimination of Council "lulus," and other significant reforms. Commissions have also advanced recommendations related to transparency and accountability. Eliminating the incentive to convene commissions would diminish an important mechanism for improving government.

Finally, as drafted, **the bill appears to provide that the automatic salary adjustment would take effect even if a Quadrennial Advisory Commission were convened.** If a Commission concluded that no salary increase was warranted or if the Council passed a law adjusting salaries for some offices but not others – the CPI salary increase would still go into effect in the first year of the term. This may be a drafting error. The triggering event should be the failure to convene a Commission within the previous four years, not the absence of a local law adjusting salaries during that period.[3]

We recommend amending the bill to authorize another citywide elected official, such as the City Comptroller, to appoint a Quadrennial Advisory Commission if the mayor fails to do so by the statutory deadline.[4] This would reduce the likelihood that a

[3] To make the commission's appointment the trigger to the automatic salary adjustment, proposed § 3-601(i) should be amended to read as follows:

i. 1. If, on the January 1 of any year following the election of a mayor pursuant to section 4 of the charter, <u>no Quadrennial advisory commission has been appointed pursuant to this section during the previous 4 calendar years,</u> the salaries of one or more of the offices of mayor, public advocate, comptroller, borough president, council member, or district attorney of the counties of New York, Bronx, Kings, Queens, and Richmond ~~have not been amended by local law during the previous 4 calendar years, the salaries of any such offices that have not been amended~~ shall be adjusted by the total change from the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for New York-Newark-Jersey City published by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics 4 years prior to the most recent such index and the most recent such index, or increased by 8.25 percent, whichever is lower.

[4] The 2026 Quadrennial Advisory Commission said that giving another official the power to appoint a commission would likely require approval through a referendum. That is inaccurate. This power pertains to creating an advisory commission and it is codified in the Administrative Code, not the City Charter.

commission is not convened for political reasons while allowing another citywide official with perspective into the City's fiscal health to ensure that the process moves forward.

To strengthen accountability around the mayor's decision, **the mayor should also be required to provide a written explanation whenever a Commission is not convened** by the required deadline.

Finally, we support two additional recommendations from the Commission's final report that are not included in this bill:

1. The law should require the City Council to provide a written explanation whenever it modifies or declines to adopt the recommendations of this or future Quadrennial Advisory Commissions. This would complement a similar requirement for the mayor to explain any failure to convene a Commission.

2. The Council should consider codifying the prohibition on Council Member "lulus," since the practice remains authorized under Charter § 26(b), even though it has long since been abandoned.

Testimony to the New York City Council
Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Re: With More Pay Comes More Accountability for NYC Government Officials

July 7, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Intro 2196. My name is Rachael Fauss, and I am a Senior Policy Advisor for Reinvent Albany. Reinvent Albany advocates for transparent and accountable government in New York.

We support competitive salaries for elected and appointed government officials because we want government service to appeal to a broad spectrum of qualified candidates.

We were encouraged that the Council reached an agreement with Mayor Mamdani to appoint a Quadrennial Compensation Commission, and appreciate the Commission's acknowledgement that our public testimony informed their report and recommendations. This Council hearing is another important opportunity for the City Council to hear from the public about the proposed compensation legislation, which incorporates the recommendations of the Quadrennial Commission and the Council's own perspective.

In brief, here are our positions on the various components of Intro 2196:

1. **Salary increases for elected officials – SUPPORT**
   - Mayor: **$305,800** up from $258,750
   - Comptroller: **$247,100** up from $209,050
   - Public Advocate: **$218,400** up from $184,800
   - Borough Presidents: **$211,800** up from $179,200
   - Speaker of the City Council: **$194,440** up from $164,500
   - City Council Members: **$175,500** up from $148,500
   - District Attorneys: **$251,500** up from $212,800
2. **Reforms to commission process – SUPPORT**
   - Commission will re-start in 2028 (third year of term) and appointed every four years thereafter
   - Salary increases would take effect the year after mayoral elections, next in 2030, but for this one-time increase in 2026
   - Commission has **120 days** to issue a report, up from 75
3. **Automatic 8.25% increase/inflation adjustment if future commissions are not formed – OPPOSE**
   - This provision would effectively eliminate all public input regarding elected officials' salaries if a Quadrennial Commission is not formed. Currently, the City Council

must pass legislation to enact all pay raises, triggering a public hearing – whether or not it is upon the recommendation of the Quadrennial Commission.
    - The commission process at the city level is one of few opportunities for the public to discuss with policymakers not only appropriate salary levels, but also important reforms like caps or bans on outside income, and financial disclosure transparency.
    - Additionally, this proposal may create an incentive for the Mayor to not convene the commission because it is the path of least resistance.
4. **Require the Comptroller to publish a table of elected officials' salaries - SUPPORT**
    - The bill, however, should specifically state that this information is to be published on the Comptroller's website.

NYC Council has Traditionally Accompanied Raises for Itself with Ethics and Transparency Reforms

We encourage the Council to accompany any salary increase legislation with additional reforms to ethics or transparency. In 2015, the City Council required elected officials' disclosure forms be published on the Conflicts of Interest Board (COIB) website, and eliminated lulus. The Council must continue this important tradition of providing a benefit to the public, while they themselves reap the benefit of a pay increase. Specifically, we recommend the following:

- The Council should be required to provide reasons in writing whenever it modifies or does not accept the recommendations of the Quadrennial Commissions – **The Quadrennial Commission endorsed Reinvent Albany and Citizens Union's recommendation to do this.**
- The Council should remove mentions of stipends, aka "lulus" in the City Charter – **The Quadrennial Commission asked the Council to consider this change, which we support.**
- **The Council should make financial disclosures more accessible.** The Quadrennial Commission stated that our proposals in this area "have merit" though felt they were outside their purview. Fortunately, you, the Council, have the authority to make this happen.
    - **Require elected officials' forms to be available in an open data format.** We note that this would require COIB to upgrade its databases, which COIB told the Council at the June 2026 budget hearing it would like to do.
    - **Require all of the financial disclosure statements from the times current and former elected officials were in office be available on the COIB website.** Currently, forms of former officials, like Eric Adams's statement from 2025, must still be requested from COIB, which triggers a notification. This should be corrected.
    - **Remove the notification requirement for requests for <u>all</u> financial disclosure statements.** The State does not require the identity of a person requesting a financial disclosure to be disclosed to the government official, nor should New York City. At the state level, it is simply submitted as a FOIL request.

Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please email Rachael Fauss, Senior Policy Advisor, at rachael@reinventalbany.org.

Final Written Testimony in Support of Salary Increase & Intro 443

Good morning, Chair and Members of the Committee.

My name is **Jennifer Liza Alexander**. I respectfully submit this written testimony for the record.

I am here today to testify in writing in support of increasing compensation for members of the New York City Council and other government officials because I believe effective public service should be fairly compensated.

At the same time, I respectfully ask the Council to demonstrate its commitment to fiscal responsibility by voting to pass and enact **Intro 443 (formerly Intro 440)**.

I believe restoring the **NYC Department of Social Services Eligibility Specialist assigned caseworker** has the potential to significantly reduce unnecessary administrative spending by returning all core day-to-day eligibility functions to accountable government employees.

Today, the work of **one government Eligibility Specialist** has been outsourced and fragmented among multiple third-party vendors, subcontractors, supervisors, coordinators, analysts, housing specialists, outreach staff, technicians, and other administrative positions. Instead of working directly with the assigned government Eligibility Specialist, constituents are required to work through an intermediary third-party vendor that gathers employment, income, housing, and eligibility information before forwarding it to HRA and DHS for processing.

This unnecessary fragmentation has reduced direct government accountability, increased administrative costs, and created delays that constituents report have contributed to lost paperwork, delayed housing placements, incorrect voucher calculations, repeated follow-up, and prolonged stays in emergency housing.

Historically, every constituent worked directly with one assigned government Eligibility Specialist. Face-to-face appointments were scheduled whenever necessary to review employment, income, household composition, benefits, and housing eligibility.

When employment or income changed, constituents were referred to the **Bureau of Eligibility Verification (BEV)** for an in-person financial eligibility appointment. Trained government employees reviewed original documents, including identification, pay stubs, W-2 forms, tax records, bank statements, benefit award letters, and other financial records before eligibility determinations were made. This face-to-face verification process protected both constituents and taxpayers.

I respectfully ask the Council to restore an assigned Eligibility Specialist for **all CityFHEPS voucher holders** and for constituents utilizing low-threshold outreach services, Stabilization Beds, Drop-In Centers, Safe Haven programs, and single adult shelters.

I also ask the Council to restore the **Bureau of Eligibility Verification**, restore the **Government Fraud Prevention Unit**, and restore face-to-face financial eligibility verification so trained government employees once again review original identification, employment records, pay stubs, W-2 forms, tax records, bank statements, and other financial documentation before eligibility determinations are made.

I also ask the Council to recognize that the **Stabilization Bed population** is different from the population that requires supportive housing.

Their primary need is permanent affordable housing due to financial circumstances. Many of these constituents are employed, earn incomes of approximately $50,000 or more, and are not eligible for CityFHEPS vouchers. Despite maintaining steady employment and providing strong employment and prior residential references, many wait extended periods without being matched to permanent independent affordable housing.

These constituents are not seeking or participating in ongoing clinical or supportive services. They should not be indistinguishably grouped with a population that has documented serious mental illness, substance use disorders, or other complex service needs requiring a different level of care, supervision, and housing intervention.

Constituents deserve to know whether CAPS assessments were completed, whether 2010(e) supportive housing referral packages were prepared or submitted without their informed consent, and whether employment and income were accurately reported to HRA and DHS.

I also respectfully request greater public transparency regarding the deaths of individuals who died outdoors during the winter. I ask the City to publicly report the findings of any follow-up reviews or investigations, including, where appropriate, the date each individual was last contacted or encountered by any contracted outreach provider, shelter provider, Safe Haven provider, street medicine outreach team, supportive housing provider, or related contractor. This information is important to evaluate system performance, identify gaps in services, strengthen accountability, and help prevent future tragedies.

By restoring the assigned Eligibility Specialist, face-to-face Bureau of Eligibility Verification, and the Government Fraud Prevention Unit, the City can strengthen accountability, improve financial verification, reduce duplication, and better safeguard federal, state, and local taxpayer funds.

I respectfully urge the Council to vote **YES** on **Intro 443**.

Restore the assigned NYC Department of Social Services Eligibility Specialist.
Restore face-to-face government oversight.
Restore the Bureau of Eligibility Verification.
Restore the Government Fraud Prevention Unit.
Restore one constituent, one government caseworker, and one accountable government agency.

I would also like to recognize and thank Council Member **Althea V. Stevens**, the prime sponsor of **Intro 443 (formerly Intro 440)**, and the co-sponsors **Selvena N. Brooks-Powers, Tiffany L. Cabán, Harvey D. Epstein,** and **Frank Morano** for continuing to advance this important legislation. I also thank Council Members **Crystal Hudson, Sandra Nurse, Vickie Paladino** and **Christopher Banks**, and everyone else who continues to fight for NYCHA, independent affordable housing, ELLA housing, and senior housing. I respectfully ask every Member of the Council to support the emergency passage of **Intro 443**.

Please know that this proposal restores government operations as they once were, saves taxpayer dollars, restores face-to-face human contact within our local communities, strengthens accountability, and helps New Yorkers return to permanent affordable housing as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jennifer Liza Alexander
Astoria, NY 11106

7/07/2026

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Date: 10/1/26

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Name: Christopher Leon Johnson

Address: [redacted] Buffalo Ave [redacted]

I represent:

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