



THE CITY OF NEW YORK INDEPENDENT BUDGET OFFICE

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City Could Save \$42 Million Annually by Shifting to On-Cycle Local Elections

August 15, 2024, – At the request of Citizens Union, the Independent Budget Office of New York City evaluated the fiscal impact of moving all local odd-year elections to even-numbered years alongside state and federal elections. In 1894, the New York State constitution was amended to require that all City elections be held in odd numbered years. A change at the State level would be required for a shift to even-year elections.

Over recent years, the Board of Elections has spent over \$200 million per year on standard operations and to conduct elections. To determine the specific costs to conducting elections, the Independent Budget Office utilized [annual Board of Election reports](#) for each calendar year over the past 10 fiscal years through 2014 and 2023.

IBO's report can be accessed [here](#), and key findings of the report can be found below:

- Total election-related costs for the past five odd-year elections range from \$15 million in 2016 up to \$63 million in 2022.
- Based on IBO estimates, the City could save about \$42 million every two years by holding local elections during regular election years.
- The largest expense in elections is the cost of poll workers, while other costs like staff transportation and furniture rentals are lower.

For Most Odd-Year Election Cycles, Primary Elections Comprised the Largest Share of Total Costs

Dollars in Millions

Fiscal Year	Cost of General Elections	Cost of Primary Elections	Total
2014	17	23	40
2016	10	5	15

2018	14	21	35
2020	20	35	55
2022	31	32	63



New York City Independent Budget Office

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