

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF CAPITAL PROJECTS

CITY HALL AND PUBLIC AUDITORIUM IMPROVEMENTS

Ordinance No: 666-2026

Legislative Purpose: To authorize construction, rehabilitation, and renovation for certain areas of Cleveland City Hall and Public Auditorium; to authorize the Director of Capital Projects and the Department of Public Works, as appropriate, to enter into contracts to make said improvements; to employ architects, landscape architects, and engineers to provide professional services; and to direct the employment of the necessary labor.

Public improvements may be made by one or more contracts utilizing a project delivery method authorized by the codified ordinances, including but not limited to Design-Bid-Build, Design-Build, and Construction Manager at Risk.

This is individual legislation to supplement the approved Capital Improvement Plan annual project lists to approve this project and allow for the use of 2026 capital debt to perform capital improvements to City-owned public facilities.

Project Summary: This legislation authorizes the next phase of the City Hall Modernization project—an essential investment in making Cleveland City Hall fully accessible, functional, and reflective of the level of service residents expect and deserve. City Hall is one of the most visible and heavily used public buildings in Cleveland, yet key entry points, interior spaces, and building systems remain outdated and, in some cases, inaccessible to the very residents the City serves. These improvements focus on core building functions—safe entry, accessibility, mechanical systems, and public-facing spaces—that are essential to daily operations. This is not a discretionary upgrade, but a necessary investment to ensure that residents can reliably access City services in a safe and functional environment.

This phase prioritizes improvements that will have an immediate and meaningful impact on the public

experience. Chief among them is the construction of a fully ADA-accessible entrance, paired with a safer and more efficient drop-off and security process. Today, residents—including seniors, individuals with disabilities, and families with strollers—often face unnecessary barriers when entering City Hall, including long queues that extend into the garage and limited accessible pathways. These conditions are not consistent with the City’s commitment to accessibility, equity, and dignified public service.

In addition to improving access, the project modernizes critical infrastructure within the building. Planned upgrades include new and renovated restrooms, modern HVAC systems to improve air quality and reliability, enhanced security, and the addition of a freight elevator to improve building operations. The project also includes basic public-facing amenities to support visitors during wait times and extended visits.

The project advances operational efficiency by improving departmental adjacencies, including the relocation of Parks and Recreation administrative staff to Public Auditorium. These changes will improve coordination among divisions and make better use of City-owned facilities.

City Hall serves approximately 700 employees and more than 65,000 visitors annually during standard business hours, with thousands more attending meetings and events outside those hours. Despite this level of use, many areas of the building do not meet modern standards for accessibility, safety, or workplace functionality and will become more costly to address over time. Residents from every ward rely on City Hall to access services, making this a citywide investment.

This is a strategic, phased investment that builds on more than \$20 million already committed to exterior restoration and related improvements. It reflects a broader effort to ensure that public facilities across Cleveland are safe, accessible, and aligned with the needs of residents and employees, including providing a modern workplace that supports employee retention and effective public service delivery.

Advancing this project now will deliver visible, meaningful improvements to how residents experience City Hall while protecting a critical civic asset for the future.

Key Justifications:

(A) Advancing Accessibility and Equity:

Access to City Hall should not be a barrier for any resident. Today, it is. This project removes those barriers by modernizing entrances, circulation paths, restrooms, and service areas to meet ADA standards. It ensures that seniors, individuals with disabilities, and families can access City services safely, efficiently, and with dignity. This is not just a compliance issue—it is a fundamental equity commitment.

(B) Improving Efficiency and Reducing Long-Term Costs:

Much of City Hall’s infrastructure is outdated, inefficient, and increasingly costly to maintain. Strategic upgrades to lighting, HVAC systems, and building controls will reduce energy use, lower operating costs, and improve reliability. Delaying these investments will increase future costs and the risk of system failures that disrupt operations. Continued delays increase the likelihood of disruptions to daily City Hall functions, impacting both employees and the public.

(C) Supporting Workforce Retention and Public Service Delivery:

The condition of City Hall directly impacts the City’s ability to recruit, retain, and support the workforce responsible for delivering services to residents. Many existing workspaces are outdated and do not reflect modern workplace standards, making it more difficult to retain experienced staff.

These improvements will create a safer, healthier, and more functional work environment by addressing long-standing issues with ventilation, lighting, and space configuration. Modernized facilities will improve productivity, coordination, and overall service delivery.

(D) Protecting a Critical Civic Asset:

City Hall is “The People’s House” and one of Cleveland’s most important civic buildings. It should reflect the standard of accessibility, functionality, and

service expected across the City. Proactive investment extends the life of the facility, reduces deferred maintenance, and avoids more costly emergency repairs in the future.

This legislation ensures that City Hall reflects the values expected in every neighborhood—accessibility, functionality, and reliability. Advancing this project now is a practical, responsible step that delivers immediate public benefit while addressing long-standing infrastructure and accessibility needs.

Total Estimated Cost: \$7,500,000

Breakdown by line item is attached: \$7,000,000 for City Hall and \$500,000 for Public Auditorium

Fund Sources: 01-001 General Fund; 11-006 Restricted Income Tax; Fund Nos. 20-566, 20-578, 20-585, 20-591, 20-596, 20-701, 20-711, 20-715, 20-721, 20-728; unspent public facilities proceeds from prior and 2026 Public Facilities Bonds and grants.

Specific Improvements: See attached.