Summary
Board Bill Number 96
Introduced by Alderwoman Daniela Velazquez
October 16, 2026

An ordinance submitting to the qualified voters of the City of St. Louis the question of whether to amend the Charter of the City of St. Louis by repealing and replacing Article XVIII to update the City's civil service and human resources system.

BOARD BILL NUMBER 96 INTRODUCED BY ALDERWOMAN DANIELA VELAZQUEZ
CO-SPONSORS: MAYOR CARA SPENCER/PRESIDENT MEGAN/ALDERMAN MATT DEVOTI/ALDERMAN BRET NARAYAN

An ordinance submitting to the qualified voters of the City of St. Louis the question of whether to amend the Charter of the City of St. Louis by repealing and replacing Article XVIII to update the City's civil service and human resources system.

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis is a large public-sector employer, typically employing more than 4,000 people; and

WHEREAS, the City employs those workers across various departments, agencies, and public services; and

WHEREAS, the Charter is the City's constitution, setting forth the foundational plan for the City's government, including the management of its greatest resource, the people in its employ; and

WHEREAS, Article XVIII of the Charter establishes the fundamental rules governing civil service; and

WHEREAS, Article XVIII is outdated, obsolete, and antiquated, substantially remaining in the form in which it was passed when the Charter was adopted in 1914; and

WHEREAS, Article XVIII unduly interferes with the efficient hiring, retention, and effective support of the City's workforce, demanding its replacement with a modern system capable of meeting the City's human resource demands today and into the indefinite future.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION ONE.

The following amendment to the Charter of the City of St. Louis is hereby proposed and submitted to the voters of the City and to be voted upon at an election to be held on Tuesday, the

6th day of April 2027, namely that Article XVIII of the Charter of the City of St. Louis is hereby repealed and replaced in its entirety with **Exhibit A**, attached hereto. A vote in favor of such amendment shall constitute approval and adoption of the revisions as shown on **Exhibit A**.

SECTION TWO. Ballot language.

The proposed amendment to the Charter of the City of St. Louis shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the City at the general election to be held on Tuesday, the 6th day of April 2027, and if said proposed amendment shall receive in its favor the number of votes required by law, such amendment shall be adopted and become a part of the Charter of the City of St. Louis from the date of said election or such other date as prescribed in said amendment. Qualified voters of the City of St. Louis may at the election aforesaid vote a ballot substantially in the following form:

PROPOSITION __

(CHARTER AMENDMENT)

Shall Article XVIII of the City Charter be repealed and replaced to update the City's civil service and human resources system?

The changes would:

- Rename the Department of Personnel the Human Resources Department, led by a Chief Human Resources Officer.
- Keep the Civil Service Commission responsible for overseeing the merit system and hearing employee appeals, but not day-to-day HR work.
- Move deputy department directors and other listed leadership positions outside the civil service system.

- Require hiring, promotions, and other employment decisions for civil service jobs to be based on merit and fitness.
- Protect City workers from political pressure and unlawful discrimination.
- Move more details about pay, benefits, hiring, work rules, and employee appeals from the Charter into City ordinances and administrative rules.

Instructions to voters:

To vote in favor of the proposition submitted upon this ballot, place a cross (X) mark in the square opposite the word "YES"; and to vote against the proposition, place a cross (X) mark in the square opposite the word "NO".

YES [ ]

NO [ ]

SECTION THREE.

The Board of Election Commissioners shall provide the ballots or voting machines or both and conduct the election and shall ascertain and certify the result thereof according to the law. If voting machines are used, the aforesaid OFFICIAL BALLOT shall be placed or posted on the said voting machines wherever said machines are used under the direction of the Board of Election Commissioners for the City of St. Louis and according to law.

SECTION FOUR.

Upon the approval of this Ordinance, it shall be published in the City Journal, the official publication of the City of St. Louis, Missouri. Proof of the publication of this ordinance shall be made by affidavit of the City Register, and such affidavit shall be filed in the office of the City Register and a copy of such publication shall be attached thereto.

SECTION FIVE.

Upon the approval of this amendment to the Charter of the City of St. Louis, it shall be certified, deposited and recorded as required by Article VI, Section 33 of the Constitution of the State of Missouri.

SECTION SIX.

This being a bill calling for an election for submission to the people of an amendment to the Charter of the City of St. Louis, it is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall become effective immediately upon its passage and approval by the Mayor.

EXHIBIT A

Article XVIII – Human Resources System

Section 1 - Purpose and Principles

The purpose of this Article is to establish a modern and effective system of human resources administration for the City of St. Louis that:

1. Ensures that employment decisions are based on merit and fitness.
2. Promotes fairness, equity, and transparency in employment practices.
3. Supports the recruitment, development, and retention of a qualified and diverse workforce.
4. Enables the efficient and effective delivery of City services.
5. Protects employees from political influence and unlawful discrimination.
6. Provides equal employment opportunity and does not discriminate in employment on any basis prohibited by law.

This Article shall be liberally construed to accomplish these purposes. The human resources system shall be administered in a manner that balances organizational effectiveness, employee interests, and fiscal responsibility.

Section 2 - Definitions

Terms used in this Article shall have their ordinary meaning unless otherwise defined.

(a) "**Classified service**" means positions subject to the Merit System established by this Article.
(b) "**Unclassified service**" means positions exempt from the Merit System as provided by this Article.
(c) "**Appointing Authority**" means the person or group of persons having authority under ordinance or lawfully delegated authority to make appointments to any position in the City service.
(d) "**Employee**" means an individual employed by the City.
(e) "**Merit System**" means the system of human resources administration established by this Article under which employment actions in the Classified Service are based on merit and fitness and administered in accordance with this Article and applicable ordinances and regulations.
(f) "**Administrative Regulation**" means a rule, policy, or procedure issued by the Chief Human Resources Officer pursuant to authority granted by this Article or ordinance for the administration of the City's human resources system.

Terms not defined in this Article shall have the meanings established by ordinance or Administrative Regulation.

Section 3 - Human Resources Department

There is hereby established a Human Resources Department of the City.

The Department shall be responsible for:

(a) Administration of the City's human resources system.
(b) Development and implementation of human resources policies, practices, and Administrative Regulations.
(c) Workforce planning and organizational effectiveness.
(d) Engaging in good faith collective bargaining with recognized labor unions.
(e) Ensuring compliance with this Charter, ordinances, and applicable laws.

All departments shall cooperate with the Human Resources Department and provide such information and access as necessary to ensure compliance with this Article.

Section 4 - Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO)

(a) Appointment.
The Chief Human Resources Officer shall be appointed by the Mayor from a certification of eligibles made by the Civil Service Commission from an eligible list established by means of competitive tests of fitness conducted by the Civil Service Commission, within thirty (30) calendar days after such certification. One (1) of the three (3) eligibles standing highest of such certification who have indicated their willingness to accept appointment shall be appointed by the Mayor.
(b) Role.
The CHRO shall be responsible for the administration of the City's human resources system and Appointing Authority for the Human Resources Department. The CHRO shall serve in the Unclassified Service and shall not be subject to the provisions of the Merit System applicable to positions in the Classified Service. The CHRO is responsible for the administration and oversight of the City's human resources and civil service systems and shall serve independently of the Classified Service to avoid conflicts of interest in the administration of such systems.
(c) Authority.
The CHRO shall have authority to:
    1. Administer and enforce this Article and related ordinances and regulations.
    2. Establish administrative rules and procedures consistent with this Article and City ordinances.
    3. Oversee all employment transactions to ensure compliance with merit principles.
    4. Advise the Mayor, Board of Aldermen, and departments on workforce matters.
    5. Ensure consistency and compliance in employment practices across all departments.

6. Serve as the chief negotiator in the collective bargaining process unless otherwise provided by ordinance.
7. Conduct investigations related to the administration and enforcement of the City's human resources system.
8. Provide guidance and assistance to departments on workforce and human resource matters.
9. Provide reports and recommendations as required by ordinance or requested by the Mayor, Board of Aldermen, or Civil Service Commission.

The CHRO shall have such additional authority as reasonably necessary to administer and enforce this Article and related ordinances and regulations.

(d) Removal.

1. The CHRO may be removed by the Mayor for cause, including but not limited to neglect of duty, misconduct, or inability to perform the duties of the office.
2. Prior to removal, the Civil Service Commission shall conduct a public hearing, after reasonable notice to the CHRO, and provide a recommendation to the Mayor.
3. The Mayor shall have the authority to accept or reject the recommendation of the Commission, and the decision shall be final if the Mayor accepts the recommendation.
4. Should the Mayor reject the Commission's recommendation, the matter shall be referred to the Board of Aldermen whose decision shall be final subject to any right of action under any federal or Missouri law.

Section 5 - Civil Service Commission

(a) Establishment.

There shall be a Civil Service Commission consisting of three members and an alternate appointed by the Mayor. The CHRO shall serve as the Commission's Secretary.

(b) Role.

The Commission shall:

1. Hear and decide appeals of members of the Classified Service as provided by ordinance and Administrative Regulations.
2. Provide oversight of the Merit System.
3. Promulgate civil service rules necessary to carry out its duties.
4. Secure information and assistance as may be practicable for the fitness tests for CHRO and rating the results.

(c) Limitations.

The Commission shall not exercise day-to-day administrative authority over the Human Resources Department.

(d) Members of the Civil Service Commission shall be individuals of recognized integrity, impartiality, and interest in public service and the Merit System. Additional qualifications and exclusions may be established by ordinance.
(e) Terms.
Members shall serve staggered terms as established by ordinance.
(f) Removal.
Members of the Commission may be removed by the Mayor for cause, including but not limited to neglect of duty, misconduct, or inability to perform the duties of the office, after notice and an opportunity to be heard.
(g) The composition of the Commission and compensation of each member of the Commission shall be set by ordinance.
(h) The alternate shall serve as a nonvoting member unless a voting member is not present.

Section 6 - Merit System

(a) General Rule.
Appointments, promotions, and other employment actions involving members of the Classified Service shall be based on merit and fitness.
(b) Selection Methods.
Merit and fitness may be determined through competitive examinations, structured assessments, or other valid selection methods established by ordinance, rule, or Administrative Regulation.

Section 7 - Classified and Unclassified Service

(a) The City service shall be divided into Classified and Unclassified Service.
(b) Elected officials, department heads and directors and their deputies, division heads and commissioners and their deputies, persons employed in the Office of the Mayor, persons employed by the Board of Aldermen, and appointed members of boards, commissions, and committees serving without compensation, shall serve in the Unclassified Service and not be subject to the provisions of the Merit System applicable to positions in the Classified Service.
(c) All other positions shall serve in Classified Service and are subject to the provisions of the Merit System.

Section 8 - Human Resources System

The City shall maintain systems for:

(a) Classification of positions based on duties and responsibilities.
(b) Compensation and benefits that are equitable, transparent, and competitive with relevant labor markets.
(c) Recruitment, selection, and promotion.

(d) Performance management and Employee development.
(e) Discipline and separation, consistent with due process.
(f) Standards of ethical conduct, accountability, and integrity in public service

Such systems shall be established by ordinance and Administrative Regulation.

Section 9 - Ordinances and Administrative Regulations

(a) The Mayor and Board of Aldermen shall, as provided herein, establish by ordinance such provisions as are necessary to implement this Article, including but not limited to:

1. A comprehensive compensation plan for the fixing of rates of pay of all employees in the Classified Service, and amendments thereto, on recommendation of the Civil Service Commission, and for its application and interpretation. Every appropriation and expenditure for personal services in any position in the Classified Service thereafter shall be made in accordance with the compensation plan so adopted and not otherwise;
2. Employee benefits and retirement system(s);
3. Appropriations for the Human Resources Department. For appropriations for the purposes of the Human Resources Department, adequate to provide for the effective administration and enforcement of the provisions of this Article and the rules and ordinances adopted thereunder.

(b) The Board of Aldermen may establish by ordinance such provisions as are necessary to implement this Article or delegate authority to the Civil Service Commission or CHRO to establish such provisions by rule or regulation, including but not limited to:

1. Employment policies including but not limited to hours of duty, leave, absence, and attendance;
2. Civil service appeal processes and procedures;
3. Hiring preferences for veterans and City residents; and
4. Grievance processes and procedures.

(c) The CHRO shall prepare and recommend rules, including:

1. For Civil Service Commission:
    i. Classification plan
    ii. Service rating plan
2. For recommendation to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen
    i. Draft compensation plan
    ii. Other changes as deemed desirable

(d) The Civil Service Commission shall recommend to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen in accordance with this article, ordinances that provide for:

1. A compensation plan providing properly related scales of pay for all grades of positions, and rules for its interpretation and application;
2. Such other matters within the scope of this article as require action by the mayor and Board of Aldermen; and
3. Such changes in any such matters from time to time as may be deemed to be warranted.

Section 10 - Appeals and Employee Protections

Employees in the Classified Service shall have the right to appeal disciplinary actions as provided by ordinance, civil service rule, and Administrative Regulation.

Due process protections shall be provided in accordance with law.

Section 11 - Political Activity

Employees in the Classified Service shall not be required to engage in political activity as a condition of employment.

Employment decisions shall be based on merit and fitness and shall not be conditioned upon political affiliation, political activity, political contributions, or political support. No person shall use official authority or influence to coerce political activity or to obtain political advantage in connection with any employment decision.

Restrictions on political activity shall be established by ordinance and Administrative Regulation consistent with law.

Section 12 - Cooperation

All City departments shall cooperate with the Human Resources Department and provide such information, records, and assistance as reasonably necessary to administer and enforce this Article and related ordinances and regulations.

Section 13 - Fire Department

(a) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Charter or ordinances of the City of St. Louis to the contrary or in conflict herewith, the following designated ranks and positions of members and Employees of the fire department of the City of St. Louis shall for the purposes of compensating said members and Employees of said fire department by salaries for their duties be equivalent to and correspond with the ranks and positions of officers of the police force of the City of St. Louis hereinafter set forth beside each respectively, and the salaries of said designated ranks and positions of members of the fire department of the City of St. Louis shall from and after the effective date of this section and thereafter not be less than the salaries provided by law for the said equivalent and corresponding ranks and positions of officers of the police force of the City of St. Louis, set forth beside each respectively.

Fire Department Rank or Position	**Police Force Rank or Position**
Fire Chief	Chief of Police
Deputy Fire Chief	Lieutenant Colonel, other than Assistant Chief of Police
Battalion Fire Chief	Major
Fire Captain	Lieutenant
Fire Equipment Dispatcher III	Lieutenant
Fire Fighter, Fire Equipment Dispatcher I and II and Fire Prevention Inspector who has served more than twenty years in the Fire Department	Patrolman who has served more than twenty years as a patrolman
Fire Fighter, Fire Equipment Dispatcher I and II and Fire Prevention Inspector who has served more than fifteen years in the Fire Department	Patrolman who has served more than fifteen years as a patrolman
Fire Fighter, Fire Equipment Dispatcher I and II and Fire Prevention Inspector who has served more than ten years in the Fire Department	Patrolman who has served more than ten years as a patrolman
Fire Fighter, Fire Equipment Dispatcher I and II and Fire Prevention Inspector who has served more than five years in the fire Department	Patrolman who has served more than five years as a patrolman
Fire Fighter, Fire Equipment Dispatcher I and II and Fire Prevention Inspector who has served more than four years in the Fire Department	Patrolman who has served more than four years as a patrolman
Fire Fighter, Fire Equipment Dispatcher I and II and Fire Prevention Inspector who has served more than three years in the Fire Department	Patrolman who has served more than three years as a patrolman
Fire Fighter, Fire Equipment Dispatcher I and II and Fire Prevention Inspector who has served more than two years in the Fire	Patrolman who has served more than two years as a patrolman

Department	
Fire Fighter, Fire Equipment Dispatcher I and II and Fire Prevention Inspector who has served more than one year in the Fire Department	Patrolman who has served more than one year as a patrolman
Fire Fighter, Fire Equipment Dispatcher I and II and Fire Prevention Inspector who is serving in their first year in the Fire Department	Patrolman who is beginning their first year as a patrolman

(b) All provisions of the Charter and ordinances of the City of St. Louis and rules thereunder or parts thereof, inconsistent with this amendment are hereby repealed.

Section 14 - Investigatory powers of the CHRO

In the course of any hearing, investigation, or tests of fitness conducted under the provisions of this Article, the CHRO and any other person authorized by them as their representative for such purposes, shall have power to administer oaths, to subpoena and require the attendance of witnesses within the City and the production by them of books and papers pertinent to any matter of inquiry and to examine such witnesses under oath, in relation to any matter properly involved in such proceeding. For such purposes, the CHRO or their authorized representative may invoke the power of any court of record in the City, or judge thereof, in term time or vacation, to compel the attendance and testifying of witnesses and the production of books and papers in compliance with such subpoenas. All witnesses so subpoenaed, who are not Employees of the City, shall be entitled to the same fees as are allowed in civil cases in courts of record, which shall be paid upon vouchers approved by the CHRO from the appropriations of the Human Resources Department on the audit and warrant of the Comptroller.

Section 15 - Transition and Continuity

The provisions of this Article shall immediately take effect, except for a change in any Employee's classification status shall not take effect until the passage of twelve (12) months following this Article's adoption. All ordinances and administrative rules inconsistent with this Article are hereby repealed. All ordinances and administrative rules consistent with Article shall remain in effect.

FISCAL NOTE
BOARD BILL NUMBER 96

Preparer's Name *Cheryl Campbell*

Phone Number or Email Address (will be available publicly) *campbellch@stlouis-mo.gov*

Bill Sponsor *Alderwoman Daniela Velazquez*

Bill Synopsis:	*An ordinance submitting to the qualified voters of the City of St. Louis the question of whether to amend the Charter by repealing and replacing Article XVIII to update the City's civil service and human resources system. The proposed amendment establishes a Human Resources Department led by a Chief Human Resources Officer; defines Civil Service Commission responsibilities; revises classified and unclassified service provisions; and provides for employment policies, compensation, benefits, and administrative procedures through ordinances and regulations. It also provides for departmental appropriations, salaries for designated Fire Department positions, and payment of qualifying subpoenaed witnesses.*
Type of Impact:	*Indeterminate (Conditional upon Voter Approval; Ongoing Appropriation Required).*
Agencies Affected:	*Department of Personnel/proposed Human Resources Department;* *Civil Service Commission;* *Fire Department;* *Office of the Mayor;* *Board of Aldermen;* *Comptroller's Office;* *Board of Election Commissioners;* *City Register.*

SECTION A
Does this bill authorize:

- An expansion of services which entails additional costs beyond that approved in the current adopted city budget? ____Yes ____*X*No

- An undertaking of a new service for which no funding is provided in the current adopted city budget? ____Yes ____*X*No

- A commitment of city funding in the future under certain specified conditions? __*X*__Yes ___No

- An issuance of bonds, notes and lease-purchase agreements which may require additional funding beyond that approved in the current adopted city budget? ____Yes ____*X*No

- An execution or initiation of an activity as a result of federal or state mandates or requirements? ____Yes ____*X*No

- A capital improvement project that increases operating costs over the current adopted city budget? ____Yes ____*X*No

- A capital improvement project that requires funding not approved in the current adopted city budget or that will require funding in future years? ____Yes ____*X*No

If the answer is yes to any of the above questions, then a fiscal note must be attached to the board bill. Complete Section B of the form below.

SECTION B

- Does the bill require the construction of any new physical facilities? ____Yes __*X*__No
    - If yes, describe the facilities and provide the estimated cost:

      _____

      _____

- Is the bill estimated to have a direct fiscal impact on any city department or office? __*X*__Yes ____No
    - If yes, explain the impact and the estimated cost:

Upon voter approval, the amendment requires appropriations adequate to administer and enforce the human resources system, provides for salaries of designated Fire Department positions to be no less than those of corresponding Police Force ranks and positions, and requires payment of qualifying subpoenaed witnesses from Human Resources Department appropriations. Any additional expenditures will depend on implementation, applicable salary levels, and witness

participation; the additional fiscal impact accordingly is indeterminate. The bill also requires election administration and publication, for which any additional costs are indeterminate.

- Does the bill create a program or administrative subdivision? __*X*__Yes ____No
    - If yes, then is there a similar existing program or administrative subdivision? __*X*__Yes ____No
    - If yes, explain the how the proposed programs or administrative subdivisions may overlap:

The proposed Human Resources Department would perform personnel administration and civil service functions currently associated with the Department of Personnel. The amendment replaces the existing Charter framework and assigns responsibilities to the Chief Human Resources Officer and Civil Service Commission.

- Describe the annual operating, equipment, and maintenance costs that would result from the proposed bill, as well as any funding sources:

Annual operating costs would include administration of the human resources system, employee compensation, and qualifying witness payments. Any additional operating, equipment, and maintenance costs will depend on implementation and accordingly are indeterminate. Section 9 provides for Human Resources Department appropriations through ordinance; Section 14 directs witness payments from those appropriations.

Complete the chart below to list the total estimated expenditures required of the City resulting from the proposed board bill and any estimated savings or additional revenue.

Financial Estimate of Impact on General Fund			
Fiscal Impact	**Year 1 (current)**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**
Additional Expenditures	*Indeterminate*	*Indeterminate*	*Indeterminate*
Additional Revenue	*$0*	*$0*	*$0*
Net	*Indeterminate*	*Indeterminate*	*Indeterminate*
Financial Estimate of Impact on Special Funds			
Fiscal Impact	**Year 1 (current)**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**
Additional Expenditures	*Indeterminate*	*Indeterminate*	*Indeterminate*
Additional Revenue	*$0*	*$0*	*$0*
Net	*Indeterminate*	*Indeterminate*	*Indeterminate*

- Describe any assumptions used in preparing this fiscal note:

The proposed Human Resources Department is treated as the successor to the Department of Personnel rather than an additional concurrent department. The salary and witness-payment provisions are not assumed to create increases over existing obligations. Financial estimates reflect potential additional expenditures rather than the total cost of existing personnel functions; no additional revenue is assumed because the bill establishes no new revenue source. Expenditure estimates remain indeterminate by fund because funding allocations will depend on implementation and subsequent appropriations.

- List any sources of information (including any City officials, agencies, or departments) used in preparing this fiscal note:

Board Bill language – Article XVIII Civil Service and Human Resources System – Alderwoman Daniela Velazquez, including Exhibit A and Summary.

- Have the financial estimates of this bill been verified by the City Budget Division?

____Yes __*X*__No

  - If yes, by whom? _____ .