

This information was compiled by staff from the L.P. Cookingham Institute of Urban Affairs to provide members of the Kansas City Charter Review Commission with some basic descriptive information about voter turnout for municipal elections in Kansas City and several peer cities for the meeting on July 31, 2013. Information about the demographic characteristics of each city and several key features of their municipal structure are included to provide context for the turnout data.

Voter Turnout and Selected City Demographics

	Kansas City	Cincinnati	Denver	Fort Worth	Memphis	Minneapolis	Omaha	St. Louis
Voter Turnout in Municipal Elections (Average for last three elections)	23%	36%	43%	7%	TBD	30%	28%	12%
Total Population	459,787	296,943	600,158	741,206	646,889	382,578	408,958	319,294
Persons of Hispanic or Latino Origin	9.99%	2.80%	31.82%	34.06%	6.49%	10.47%	13.09%	3.49%
Black or African American Alone	29.91%	44.80%	10.24%	18.91%	63.33%	18.58%	13.68%	49.22%
White Alone	59.22%	49.30%	68.93%	61.10%	29.39%	63.80%	73.07%	43.93%
Per Capita Income	\$26,372	\$24,509	\$32,051	\$24,270	\$21,397	\$30,693	\$26,842	\$22,050
Median Age in Years	34.6	31.5	33.7	31.2	33	31.4	33.5	33.9
Percent of Residents Who Are Married	15.70%	11.30%	15.10%	16.90%	11.40%	13.10%	16.90%	19.70%
With Own Children Under 18 Years	27.0%	22.80%	22.40%	36.70%	27.20%	22.00%	28.30%	22.30%
White-Black Dissimilarity Index in 2000	70.70%	64.10%	67.40%	62.5%	68.60%	61.30%	70.20%	72.40%
White-Hispanic Dissimilarity Index in 2000	52.00%	35.10%	59.00%	58.10%	55.70%	54.60%	57.1%	39.2%

Sources: Demographic data from the 2010 U.S. Census, except as indicated. The percentages for racial categories do not sum to 100% because the U.S. Census reports the percentage of persons of Hispanic or Latino origin separately from race. Turnout data compiled from city and county election boards. Data cover municipal elections held in March, April, or May, except for Minneapolis and Cincinnati, which hold November elections in odd years, and Memphis, which holds October elections. All elections are held on a Tuesday, except for Fort Worth, which holds Saturday elections, and Memphis, which holds Thursday elections. The dissimilarity index measures the relative separation or integration of groups across all neighborhoods of the city. For example, a White-Black dissimilarity index of 65 indicates 65% of the Whites in the city would need to move to another neighborhood to create an even distribution of Whites and Blacks across all neighborhoods in the city.

Voter Turnout and Several Key Elements of Municipal Institutional Structure Relating to the Office of the Mayor

	Kansas City	Cincinnati	Denver	Fort Worth	Memphis	Minneapolis	Omaha	St. Louis
Voter Turnout in Municipal Elections (Average for last three elections)	23%	36%	43%	7%	TBD	30%	28%	12%
Nominal Form of Government	Council-Manager	Council-Manager	Mayor-Council	Council-Manager	Mayor-Council	Mayor-Council	Mayor-Council	Mayor-Council
Process for Mayoral Elections	Directly elected	Directly elected	Directly elected	Directly elected	Directly elected	Directly elected	Directly elected	Directly elected
Mayor's Term of Office	4 years	4 years	4 years	2 years	4 years	4 years	4 years	4 years
Mayor FT/PT	Not specified in charter	Full time	Full time	Not specified in charter	Full time	Not specified in charter	Part time	Full time
Formal Participation of Mayor in Council Decisions	Presides over City Council when in attendance.	Presides over City Council, but no vote.	None. Executive and legislative powers separated by charter.	Yes, voting member of council.	None. Executive and legislative powers separated by charter.	May recommend ordinances but not vote on them.	May recommend ordinances but not vote on them.	May introduce ordinances but not vote on them.
Power of Mayor to Remove Senior Appointed Administrator (City Manager or CAO, depending on the terminology used by city)	Mayor and votes from 6 other Council members; Council needs 9 votes to remove CM without Mayor's support.	Mayor can recommend, but removal requires 5 votes of the City Council.	Neither hiring or removal of CAO are addressed in the Charter	Only as one vote as a member of the City Council	Neither hiring or removal of CAO are addressed in the Charter	Neither hiring or removal of CAO are addressed in the Charter	Neither hiring or removal of CAO are addressed in the Charter	Neither hiring or removal of CAO are addressed in the Charter

Source: City charters of each city as of July 2013.

Voter Turnout and Several Key Elements of Municipal Institutional Structure related to Council City

	Kansas City	Cincinnati	Denver	Fort Worth	Memphis	Minneapolis	Omaha	St. Louis
Voter Turnout in Municipal Elections (Average for last three elections)	23%	36%	43%	7%	TBD	30%	28%	12%
Council's Term Length	4 years	2 years	4 years	2 years	4 years	4 years	4 years	4 years
Council FT/PT	Full time	Not specified in charter	Not specified in charter	Not specified in charter	Part time	Not specified in charter	Part time	Not specified in charter
# of Council Seats	13 (with Mayor)	9	13	9 (with Mayor)	13	13	7	29
# of Council Districts	6	All at-large	11	8	7 districts, 2 super districts	13	All at-large	28
Partisan Elections	No	No	Unknown	No	Unknown	No, but party listed on ballot	No	No
Process for Council Elections	Six district, six at-large members, primary to select two candidates for general	Top 9 candidates getting the most votes elected to City Council	11 district, 2 at-large members	Districts, no primary	Three council members in each of two super districts: Super District 8 is made up of Districts 6 and 7, and the majority of Districts 3 and 4; Super District 9 is made up of Districts 1, 2, and 5, and a small section of	Districts, no primary	Elected at-large	28 ward, 1 at-large President of Board of Aldermen with general elections every two years to create staggered terms; no primary.

Source: City charters of each city as of July 2013.

