

PROPOSED CITY OF LONG BEACH CHARTER AMENDMENT CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

June 11, 2024

CITY OF
LONG BEACH



AGENDA

01 Review of Proposed Charter Amendment

- Foundations of the Proposed Charter Amendment
- Modernizing the Hiring Structure

02 Council Feedback from May 7th Meeting

- Maintaining Equitable & Inclusive Hiring Practices
- Safeguards For a Merit-Based System
- Hiring Challenges in Public Agencies
- Holistic Approach

03 Addressing Potential Concerns with New System

04 New Local Hiring Preferences

- Implementation of Preferences
- What Is Banding?

05 Voter Survey

- Assessing Support for Civil Service Reform
- Summary of Polling Results
- Second Vote Polling Results

06 Next Steps

REVIEW OF PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT

Foundations of the Proposed Charter Amendment

- Merit System Hiring and Employee Protections remain in place, ensuring a process for employees and candidates to appeal actions independently from the City Manager.
- Unify all citywide hiring to one central department to create a more effective and efficient recruitment and selection process that meets the needs of the modern workforce.
- Implement new hiring preferences that focus on:
 - Cultivating local talent
 - Supporting current part-time employees
 - Empowering internships and apprenticeships

MODERNIZING THE HIRING STRUCTURE

Operational Independence

- Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission continues to operate independently of the City Manager.
- Supported by a designated, budgeted staff member in the City Attorney's Office.

Commission Duties

- Handle complaints related to the hiring process of Classified employees.
- Hear and review disciplinary appeals.
- Public safety employees have option for disciplinary cases to be heard by a hearing officer or the Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission.

Align Structure with Nearly All Other Public Agencies

- Hiring is an ongoing challenge in public sector agencies across the state.
 - Creates unnecessary bureaucracy, extending the hiring process timeline, which prompted many to opt for models similar to this proposed charter amendment.
- The current structure at the City of Long Beach creates extra barriers.
 - The proposed amendment will streamline hiring, making Long Beach more competitive in attracting, developing, and retaining diverse talent.

COUNCIL FEEDBACK FROM MAY 7TH MEETING

Additional details were requested regarding the initial proposal presented during the meet and confer process, as well as the final proposal that resulted after the meet and confer discussions.

Charter Amendment Changes

- City Clerk and Police Oversight were added as departments that do not fall under City Manager's purview.
- Public safety employees have the option to have their disciplinary cases heard by a hearing officer or the Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission.
- Exemption of Tidelands funded positions from local preferences as per state law.

Letter of Agreement (LOA) Highlights

- If approved by voters, a second meet and confer process will take place before any changes occur.
- Option for Civil Service Department employees to transfer to another City department without loss of pay, seniority, or benefits.
- Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission continues to have jurisdiction for appeals over alleged hiring violations of rules and regulations.
- Process for transitioning a classification to the Unclassified Service.
- City to meet and confer with unions before presenting Civil Service Rules and Regulations amendments.

Additional Agreements

- City Council-directed independent investigations to involve outside independent investigators.
- Designated staff within elected City Attorney's Office to assist the Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission.
- Routine compliance audits of the recruitment and selection process by outside consulting firms.

MAINTAINING EQUITABLE & INCLUSIVE HIRING PRACTICES

The proposed charter amendment to merge City hiring into one unified department creates the opportunity to enhance more equitable and inclusive hiring practices, including but not limited to:

- **Removing Barriers.** Streamlined hiring processes to reduce delays and improve access for qualified candidates.
- **Diverse Hiring Panels.** Mandating more diverse hiring panels to ensure varied perspectives in the selection process.
- **Expedited Appeals.** Faster timelines for classified employee disciplinary appeals to ensure timely resolutions.
- **Integrated Practices.** Comprehensive approach to hiring, compensation, orientation, and development.
- **Improved Testing Access.** More frequent and flexible exam scheduling to accommodate candidates.
- **Employee Demographics Portal.** Accessible via the City's Equal Employment Opportunity webpage, this portal promotes transparency and allows the public to generate tailored reports on City employee demographics.



SAFEGUARDS FOR A MERIT-BASED SYSTEM

The City will ensure that the merit system is upheld through several key safeguards:

- **Appeal Rights.** Employees and applicants can appeal each step of the hiring process to the Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission for final decisions.
- **Council Oversight.** The City Council retains the authority to adopt and amend Civil Service Rules and Regulations, following the meet and confer process with affected labor groups.
- **Independent Investigations.** The City Council can direct the City Manager to conduct independent investigations to enforce these Charter provisions.
- **Employee Rights & Protections.** Federal and state laws, along with City of Long Beach Administrative Regulations, protect employee rights, including anti-discrimination, the City Equal Employment Opportunity process, the City Nepotism policy, and union representation.
- **Compliance Audits.** The City will regularly engage independent consulting firms to conduct compliance audits of the recruitment and selection process.
- **Commission Authority.** Certain rules will remain under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission, with appeal rights granted to the City Council for final determination.

HIRING CHALLENGES in public agencies

Long Beach and **San Diego** are the only two large cities in California where the Human Resources and Civil Service Departments operate independently, resulting in the similar hiring challenges due to their bifurcated hiring system.

In 2022, the City of San Diego considered a similar Charter amendment to consolidate hiring into one department, but City leaders ultimately decided against that proposal after several city employee unions failed to support the proposal.

The Mayor of San Diego and council members have recently renewed efforts to centralize hiring in September 2023, following an independent audit that found major delays in the city hiring process.



HOLISTIC APPROACH

While this Charter Amendment will not solve all of the City's hiring challenges, it is an essential step toward making Long Beach competitive with other agencies for top talent. This proposal is part of a holistic approach to identify improvements that will expedite hiring and reduce the high vacancy rate.

Combining Departments

- Creates a unified mission, vision, and values.
- Standardizes recruitment and hiring practices.
- Streamlines technology use and eliminates discrepancies.
- Clarifies roles and responsibilities, reducing confusion for employees and applicants.

Enhanced Collaboration

- Facilitates better communication and coordination between departments.
- Promotes knowledge sharing and best practices exchange.

Efficiency Gains

- Reduces duplication of efforts and administrative overhead.
- Improves overall efficiency in recruitment processes.

Improved Candidate Experience

- Provides a more seamless and user-friendly application process.
- Enhances transparency and consistency throughout the hiring journey.

Competitive Workforce Solutions

- Ensure competitive salaries and benefits while continuously exploring new and innovative ways to meet the demands of the workforce.

ADDRESSING POTENTIAL CONCERNS with New System



Routine Nature

- Many of the actions currently performed by the Civil Service Commission are considered routine or administrative, and in most other public agencies are approved by the Human Resources Department.



Tracking & Trending

- HR can effectively track and monitor issues that arise from these routine actions, allowing them to address concerns promptly.



Trade-off for Efficiency

- While commission review and approval might provide an additional layer of oversight, foregoing this step can expedite the decision-making process, allowing for faster responses to employee needs and organizational requirements.



Appeal Process Importance

- The power for employees to appeal decisions is crucial for safeguarding their rights. This means that if an employee disagrees with a decision made by HR, they have the option to appeal, ensuring fairness and accountability.

NEW LOCAL HIRING PREFERENCES

The proposal introduces recruitment preferences, in addition to existing Veteran preferences, to promote a more localized approach, enhancing opportunities for candidates meeting the requirements below:



Long Beach Residents

Candidates residing within Long Beach to enhance local employment opportunities and community connection.



Higher Education

Graduates from local educational institutions within a ten-mile radius of Long Beach.



Current City Employees

Candidates who are employed in a “Non-Career” capacity, accumulating at least 1,500 hours within the two years preceding the job announcement to recognize and reward their dedication to the City.



Internships & Apprenticeships

Candidates who completed relevant internships or apprenticeships, accumulating at least 1,000 hours within the two years preceding the job announcement.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PREFERENCES

HOW WOULD IT BE APPLIED?

The City would differentiate itself from other agencies with the innovative addition of local hiring preferences within the classified recruitment process, by creating a more localized and community-centered approach and enhancing efforts to attract residents to City jobs.

- Local preferences will be applied in the same manner as Veteran Points.
- Applied after an applicant has completed the screening and successfully passed the employment examination process.
 - Applicants who do not meet the minimum qualifications for the job they are applying for, or an applicant who does not pass the exam process, cannot become eligible for the job due to hiring preferences.
- Candidates passing the assessment receive, in addition to all other credits, an additional 5 points if they meet one localized preference, and up to 10 points if they meet two or more preferences.

WHAT IS BANDING?

Banding is a method used to group candidates into different categories or “bands” based on their qualifications, skills, and overall assessment scores.

- Candidates within the same band are considered equally qualified, providing flexibility in hiring decisions.
- Supports diversity and inclusion by allowing hiring managers to consider a wider range of candidates beyond the top scorer.
- Aims to make the hiring process more equitable by broadening the pool of candidates deemed eligible for a position.

Situations Where Banding May Not Be Used

- Limited Applicant Pool
- Specific Licenses or Certifications
- Public Safety Roles
- Specific Skills or Qualifications

Proposed Amendment

- Banded, along with qualifying lists, would be the primary way to deploy preferences.
- The use of banding would occur just as frequently, if not more, under the amendment.
- City Staff to explore how to incorporate preferences even in non- competitive recruitments.

VOTER SURVEY

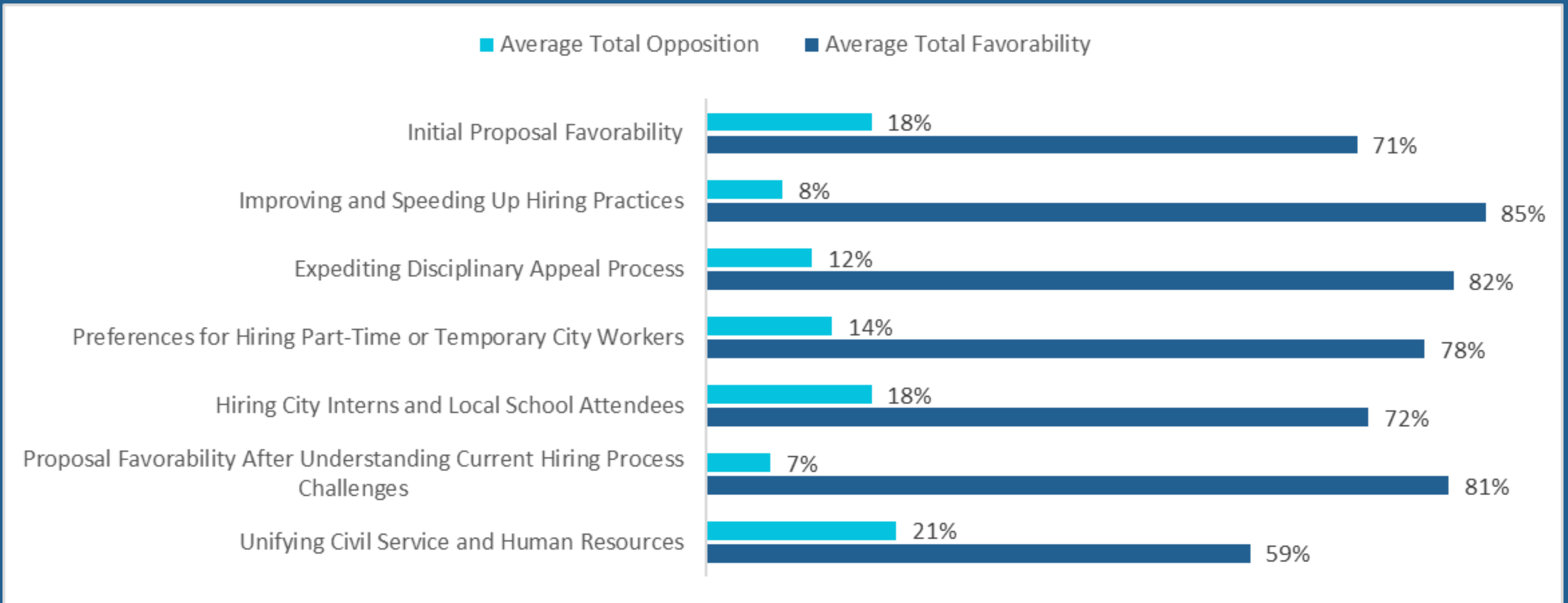
ASSESSING SUPPORT FOR CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

In anticipation of this proposed Charter Amendment, the City conducted a survey to assess voter support for the proposed City Charter for Civil Service Reform, which could be added to the ballot.

Data was collected through the specifics and methodology below and were presented with pro and con arguments about each measure and were then asked to vote a second time.

DATES	October 21-29, 2023
RESEARCH POPULATION	Long Beach Likely November 2024 Voters
TOTAL INTERVIEWS	909
DATA COLLECTION MODES	Telephone Interviews & Online Interviews
CONTACT METHODS	Telephone Calls/ Email Invitations/ Text Invitations

INITIAL POLLING RESULTS



SECONDARY POLLING RESULTS

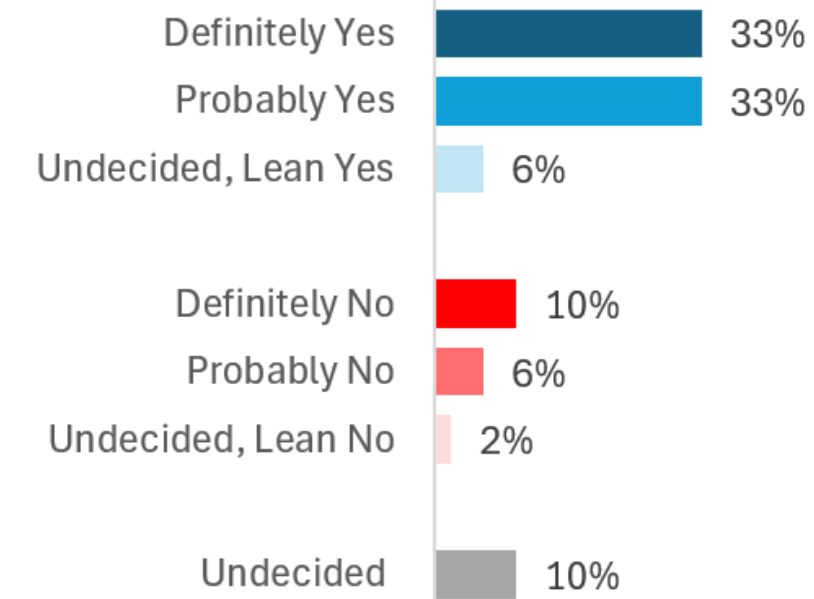
AFTER RECEIVING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION,
MORE THAN...

7 OUT OF 10

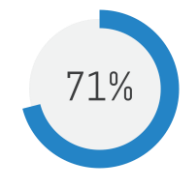


LONG BEACH VOTERS CONTINUE TO FAVOR
THE CHARTER AMENDMENT TO IMPROVE THE
CITY'S PROCESS.

INITIAL VOTE



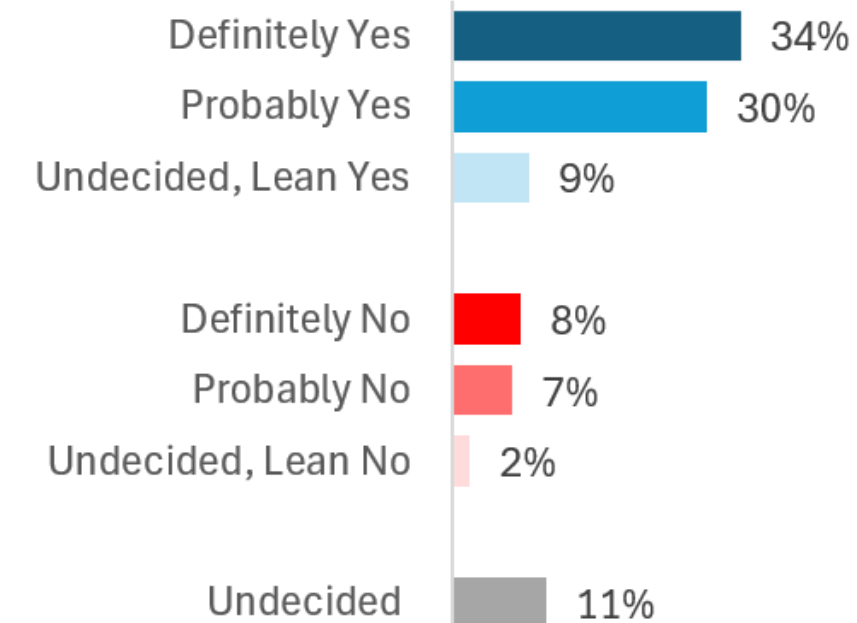
TOTAL YES



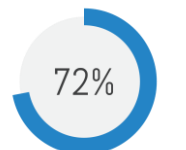
TOTAL NO



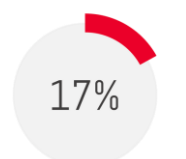
VOTE AFTER RECEIVING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



TOTAL YES



TOTAL NO



NEXT STEPS...



The City Council will host two public hearings, at which the Council may take public comment on proposed Charter Amendment.



Receive council feedback on the proposal to ensure all perspectives are considered.



If placed on the ballot and approved by voters, City staff will conduct second meet and confer before implementing any changes moving forward.



THANK YOU

