

Highlights

Why We Did This Audit

By 2020, about 33 percent of the city’s current employees (excluding the Police), will be eligible for retirement. Losing a large percentage of employees could result in a significant loss of expertise and institutional knowledge, which could disrupt the continuity of city services. This audit compares recommended practices to the city’s draft succession planning policy.

Background

Succession planning is the ongoing process of identifying critical positions and developing employees to fill those positions to meet the future needs of an organization.

The Human Resources Department developed a draft succession planning policy, the Workforce Advancement Model. The policy lays out a framework for departments to implement succession planning. The policy includes the following components:

- Identifying departmental goals and objectives.
- Analyzing the workforce.
- Implementing strategies to fill workforce gaps.
- Evaluating plan outcomes.

For more information, contact the City Auditor’s Office at 816-513-3300 or auditor@kcmo.org.

To view the complete report, go to kcmo.gov/cityauditor and click on Search Audit Reports.

PERFORMANCE AUDIT

City Could Strengthen Succession Planning Policy

What We Found

The city’s draft policy incorporates most recommended practices for succession planning including: active support from top management; assignment of roles for implementation; consideration of departments’ strategic plans; collection of data to analyze workforce trends; analysis of workforce supply and demand; identification of necessary workforce competencies; development of employee pools rather than select individuals; use of formal training and development activities to prepare employees; and incorporation of knowledge transfer tools to maintain historical and technical knowledge of employees leaving critical positions.

The Human Resources Department could strengthen the draft policy by including some additional recommended practices. These include:

- Requiring departments to compare current workforce staffing and skills to what the departments will need in the future.
- Expanding how critical positions are defined and identifying risk factors to those positions so that departments will know where to focus their succession planning efforts.
- Including a performance measurement requirement to evaluate the effectiveness of the succession plan and to hold management accountable.
- Ensuring management receives training to conduct succession planning.

Employees Eligible to Retire as of September 1, 2020¹

Department	Number	Percent
General Services	116	55.0%
City Auditor’s Office	6	54.5%
Human Relations	12	54.5%
Municipal Court	25	44.6%
City Planning & Development	51	44.0%
Parks and Recreation	100	39.4%
Public Works	126	38.5%
Aviation	144	33.6%
Law	22	32.8%
Finance	30	32.6%
Conventions & Entertainment	23	30.3%
Water Services	258	29.6%
Fire Department	364	29.1%
Health	38	28.4%
Neighborhoods & Housing	43	28.1%
Human Resources	10	27.8%
City Manager’s Office	16	23.2%
Mayor and Council	3	11.1%
City Clerk	0	0.0%
Total	1,387	33.0%

What We Recommend

Our recommendations are directed toward:

- Strengthening the succession planning policy by incorporating additional recommended practices.

Management agreed with all the recommendations.

¹ Excluding the Police Department.