

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 19

Introduced by Cavanaugh, J., 9.

Read first time January 09, 2025

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to cities of the metropolitan class; to amend
2 sections 14-201, 14-202, 14-204, 14-205, 14-206, 14-207, 14-210,
3 14-217.01, 14-376, 14-521, 14-811, 14-1206, 14-1211, 14-1216,
4 14-1251, 32-402, 32-536, and 32-554, Reissue Revised Statutes of
5 Nebraska, and section 14-211, Revised Statutes Cumulative
6 Supplement, 2024; to change provisions relating to nomination,
7 election, and terms of city council members and mayor; to change
8 provisions relating to primary and general elections; to harmonize
9 provisions; and to repeal the original sections.
10 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 **Section 1.** Section 14-201, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
2 amended to read:

3 14-201 (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, the
4 primary election for the nomination of elective officers of cities of the
5 metropolitan class shall be held on the first Tuesday of April preceding
6 the date of the general election, and the ~~In each city of the~~
7 ~~metropolitan class, seven city council members shall be elected to the~~
8 ~~city council as provided in section 32-536.~~ The general city election for
9 the election of elective officers of cities of the metropolitan class
10 shall be held on the first Tuesday after the second Monday in May 1993
11 and every four years thereafter. The terms of office of such elective
12 officers city council members shall commence on the fourth Monday after
13 such election.

14 (2)(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of any ordinance or home rule
15 charter to the contrary, commencing with the statewide primary election
16 in 2028, and every four years thereafter, candidates for elective office
17 of a city of the metropolitan class shall be nominated at the statewide
18 primary election and elected at the statewide general election. The terms
19 of office of such elective officers shall commence on the fourth Monday
20 after such election.

21 (b) Any elective officer of a city of the metropolitan class serving
22 a term that commenced on the fourth Monday after the general election
23 held in May 2025 shall serve until the fourth Monday after the statewide
24 general election in 2028, except that such elective officer may run for
25 reelection to the same office commencing in 2028 as provided in
26 subdivision (2)(a) of this section.

27 **Sec. 2.** Section 14-202, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
28 amended to read:

29 14-202 The city council of a city of the metropolitan class is
30 authorized to call, by ordinance, special elections and to submit at such
31 elections such questions and propositions as may be authorized by law to

1 be submitted to the electors at a special election. Unless otherwise
2 specifically directed, it shall be sufficient to give, in the manner
3 required by law, thirty days' notice of the time and place of holding
4 such special election. Unless otherwise specifically designated, a
5 majority vote of the electors voting on any proposition shall be regarded
6 sufficient to approve or carry such proposition. The vote at such special
7 election shall be canvassed by the authority or officer authorized to
8 canvass the vote at the general city election for the election of
9 elective officers of the city, and the result of such election certified
10 or declared and certificate of election, if required, shall be issued.

11 **Sec. 3.** Section 14-204, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
12 amended to read:

13 14-204 (1) Each city of the metropolitan class shall elect seven
14 city council members to the city council as provided in section 32-536. A
15 candidate for city council member of a city of the metropolitan class
16 shall be a registered voter and a resident of the district from which
17 such candidate ~~he or she~~ seeks election and shall have been a resident in
18 the city and district or any area annexed by the city for six months. The
19 ~~primary election for nomination of city council members shall be held on~~
20 ~~the first Tuesday of April preceding the date of the general city~~
21 ~~election.~~

22 (2) Any person desiring to become a candidate for city council
23 member shall file a candidate filing form pursuant to sections 32-606 and
24 32-607.

25 **Sec. 4.** Section 14-205, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
26 amended to read:

27 14-205 Notwithstanding any more general law respecting primary
28 elections in force in this state, the official ballot to be prepared and
29 used at the primary election under section 14-201 ~~14-204~~ shall be in
30 substantially the form provided in this section. The names of all
31 candidates shall be placed upon the ballot without any party designation.

1 Candidate for Nomination for City Council Member from City Council
2 District No., of the City of, at the
3 Primary Election

4 Vote for only one:
5
6 (Names of candidates)

7 In all other respects the general character of the ballot to be used
8 shall be the same as authorized by the Election Act.

9 In printing, the names shall not be arranged alphabetically but
10 shall be rotated according to the following plan: The form shall be set
11 up by the printer, with the names in the order in which they are placed
12 upon the sample ballot prepared by the officer authorized to conduct the
13 general ~~city~~ election. In printing the ballots for the various election
14 districts or precincts, the position of the names shall be changed for
15 each election district, and in making the change of position the printer
16 shall take the line of type containing the name at the head of the form
17 and place it at the bottom, moving ~~shoving up~~ the column up so that the
18 name that was second before the change shall be the first after the
19 change. The primary election shall be conducted pursuant to the Election
20 Act except as provided in section 14-201 ~~14-204~~ and unless otherwise
21 provided in the home rule charter or city code.

22 **Sec. 5.** Section 14-206, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
23 amended to read:

24 14-206 The two candidates receiving the highest number of votes in
25 each city council district at the primary election under section 14-201
26 ~~14-204~~ shall be the candidates and the only candidates whose names shall
27 be placed upon the official ballot for city council members in such city
28 council district at the general ~~city~~ election in such city.

29 **Sec. 6.** Section 14-207, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
30 amended to read:

31 14-207 At the general ~~city~~ election at which city council members

1 are to be elected, the ballot shall be prepared in substantially the same
2 form as provided in section 14-205, and the person receiving the highest
3 number of votes in each of the city council districts shall be the city
4 council member elected. The general ~~city~~ election shall be conducted
5 pursuant to the Election Act unless otherwise provided in the home rule
6 charter or city code.

7 **Sec. 7.** Section 14-210, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
8 amended to read:

9 14-210 (1) The right to enact ordinances for any city of the
10 metropolitan class is hereby granted to the qualified electors of such
11 city, but such grant is made upon the following conditions and in
12 addition to the right granted to the city council to legislate as
13 provided in this section.

14 (2)(a) Whenever qualified electors of any city of the metropolitan
15 class equal in number to fifteen percent of the vote cast at the last
16 preceding ~~city~~ election for the election of elective officers of the city
17 petition the city council to enact a proposed ordinance, it shall be the
18 duty of the city council to either enact such ordinance without amendment
19 within thirty days or submit such ordinance to a vote of the people at
20 the next election held within such city ~~regardless of whether such~~
21 ~~election be a city, county, or state election.~~

22 (b) Whenever such proposed ordinance is petitioned for by qualified
23 electors equal in number to twenty-five percent of the votes cast at the
24 last preceding ~~city~~ election for the election of elective officers of the
25 city and such petition requests that a special election be called to
26 submit the proposed ordinance to a vote of the people in the event that
27 the city council shall fail to enact such ordinance, the city council
28 shall either enact such ordinance without amendment within thirty days or
29 submit such ordinance to a vote of the people at a special election
30 called by the city council for that purpose. The date of such election
31 shall not be less than fifty days nor more than seventy days after the

1 filing of the petition for the proposed ordinance.

2 (3) The petition provided for in this section shall be in the
3 general form and as to signatures and verification as provided in section
4 14-212 and shall be filed with the city clerk. Upon the filing of a
5 petition, the city clerk and the county clerk or election commissioner of
6 the county in which the city is located may by mutual agreement provide
7 that the county clerk or election commissioner shall ascertain whether
8 the petition is signed by the requisite number of voters. When the
9 verifying official has ascertained the percent of the voters signing such
10 petition, such official shall transmit the official's ~~his or her~~
11 findings, together with such petition, to the city council.

12 (4) In the event the city council shall fail to enact such
13 ordinance, the city council shall submit such ordinance to a vote of the
14 people of such city as provided in this section. The mayor shall notify
15 the electors of such election at least fifteen days prior to such
16 election, and the city council shall cause to have published a notice of
17 the election and a copy of such proposed ordinance once in each of the
18 daily legal newspapers in or of general circulation in the city, or, if
19 there is no such newspaper, then once in each weekly legal newspaper in
20 or of general circulation in such city. Such publication shall be not
21 more than twenty nor less than five days prior to such election.

22 (5) All proposed ordinances shall have a title which shall state in
23 a general way the purpose and intent of such ordinance.

24 (6) The ballots used when voting upon such proposed ordinance shall
25 contain the following: For the ordinance (set forth the title thereof)
26 and Against the ordinance (set forth the title thereof).

27 (7) If a majority of the electors voting on the proposed ordinance
28 shall vote in favor of the question, such ordinance shall become a valid
29 and binding ordinance of the city. An ordinance adopted as provided in
30 this section shall not be altered or modified by the city council within
31 one year after such adoption.

1 (8) Any number of proposed ordinances may be voted upon at the same
2 election in accordance with the provisions of this section, except that
3 the same measure, either in form or essential substance, shall not be
4 submitted more often than once every two years.

5 **Sec. 8.** Section 14-211, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
6 2024, is amended to read:

7 14-211 (1)(a) No ordinance passed by the city council of a city of
8 the metropolitan class, except when otherwise required by the general
9 laws of the state, by other provisions of sections 14-201 to 14-229, or
10 as provided in subdivision (1)(b) of this section, shall go into effect
11 before fifteen days from the time of its final passage.

12 (b) An ordinance passed by the city council of a city of the
13 metropolitan class may take effect sooner than fifteen days from the time
14 of its final passage if the ordinance is:

15 (i) For the appropriation of money to pay the salary of officers or
16 employees of the city other than salaries of the mayor and city council
17 members; or

18 (ii) An emergency ordinance that is for the preservation of the
19 public peace, health, or safety and that contains a statement of such
20 emergency.

21 (2)(a) If during such fifteen days a petition, signed and verified
22 as provided in this section by electors of the city equal in number to at
23 least fifteen percent of the highest number of votes cast for any city
24 council member at the last preceding general ~~city~~ election, protesting
25 against the passage of such ordinance, shall be presented to the city
26 council, then such ordinance shall be suspended from going into
27 operation, and it shall be the duty of the city council to reconsider
28 such ordinance.

29 (b) If such ordinance is not repealed by the city council, then the
30 city council shall proceed to submit to the voters such ordinance at a
31 special election to be called for such purpose or at a general ~~city~~

1 election, and such ordinance shall not go into effect or become operative
2 unless a majority of the qualified electors voting on such ordinance
3 shall vote in favor of the question.

4 (3) Such petition shall be in all respects in accordance with the
5 provisions of section 14-212 relating to signatures, verification,
6 inspection, and certification.

7 **Sec. 9.** Section 14-217.01, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
8 amended to read:

9 14-217.01 Each A city of the metropolitan class shall elect a mayor
10 as provided in section 32-536 whose for such term of office shall
11 coincide with the terms of city council members elected concurrently to
12 the city council as may be provided by the laws and ordinances of such
13 city.

14 **Sec. 10.** Section 14-376, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
15 amended to read:

16 14-376 Whenever the qualified electors of any city of the
17 metropolitan class vote at any general or special election to acquire and
18 appropriate by an exercise of the power of eminent domain, any
19 waterworks, waterworks system, gas plant, electric light plant, electric
20 light and power plant, street railway, or street railway system, located
21 or operating within or partly within and partly without such city if the
22 main part of such works, plant, or system be within such city and even
23 though a franchise for the construction and operation of such works,
24 plant, or system may or may not have expired, then the city shall have
25 the power and authority by an exercise of the power of eminent domain to
26 appropriate and acquire for the public use of the city, such works,
27 plant, or system. The procedure to condemn property shall be exercised in
28 the manner set forth in sections 76-704 to 76-724. The city council shall
29 have the power to submit such question or proposition to the qualified
30 electors of the city at any general ~~city~~ election or at any special city
31 election and may submit such proposition in connection with any city

1 special election called for any other purpose, and the votes cast on such
2 question shall be canvassed and the result found and declared as in any
3 general other city election for the election of elective officers of the
4 city. The city council shall submit such question at any such election
5 whenever a petition asking for such submission is signed by the legal
6 voters of the city equaling in number fifteen percent of the votes cast
7 at the last general ~~city~~ election for the election of elective officers
8 of the city, and is filed in the city clerk's office at least fifteen
9 days before the election at which the submission is asked.

10 **Sec. 11.** Section 14-521, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
11 amended to read:

12 14-521 The city council of a city of the metropolitan class may
13 issue bonds, as provided in this section, for the purpose of improving
14 lands, lots, or grounds purchased, appropriated, or acquired for parks,
15 parkways, boulevards, or playgrounds. Bonds so issued shall be known as
16 park bonds and the issuance of such bonds except as provided in this
17 section shall be governed by section 14-515. The city council may issue
18 in any one year and without a vote of the electors one hundred thousand
19 dollars of such bonds. The city council may also issue such bonds if
20 authorized by a majority vote of the electors of the city voting on the
21 proposition at a general ~~city~~ election or a special election called for
22 that purpose. A part of the proceeds from the sale of such bonds may be
23 used to pay for improvements upon streets, sidewalks, or thoroughfares
24 abutting upon or immediately adjacent to parks, parkways, boulevards, and
25 playgrounds when such costs would otherwise be chargeable to the city.

26 **Sec. 12.** Section 14-811, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
27 amended to read:

28 14-811 Any ordinance or resolution granting, extending, changing, or
29 modifying the terms and conditions of a franchise in a city of the
30 metropolitan class shall not be passed until at least four weeks have
31 elapsed after its introduction or proposal, and not until such resolution

1 or ordinance has been published daily for at least two weeks in the
2 official newspaper of the city. Such ordinance or resolution shall not
3 become effective or binding until submitted to the electors and approved
4 by a majority vote of such electors. Submission to the electors shall be
5 made as provided in section 14-202. A new franchise shall not hereafter
6 be granted or any modification or extension of any existing franchise
7 made unless an annuity or royalty be provided and reserved to the city to
8 be based either upon a fixed reasonable amount per year or a fixed
9 percentage of the earnings under the operation of the franchise so
10 granted, and not then until such franchise has been submitted to a vote
11 and approved by the electors at a general ~~city~~ election or a special
12 election called for that purpose.

13 **Sec. 13.** Section 14-1206, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
14 amended to read:

15 14-1206 (1) If any city of the metropolitan class desires to
16 purchase, lease, or sublease any existing bridge and shall have received
17 any such authority as may be necessary from the government of the United
18 States, the city council may determine the fair value of such bridge, the
19 appraised value of which shall not exceed two million dollars, including
20 all interests of any nature in such bridge, and may by written resolution
21 tentatively offer the owners of such bridge jointly the price so
22 determined.

23 (2) If all such owners within ninety days thereafter shall file with
24 the city clerk of such city a duly authorized and properly executed
25 written tentative acceptance of such offer, binding themselves to accept
26 such offer and to assign such lease or sublease or convey good and
27 complete title by warranty deed when and if the necessary funds shall be
28 provided for such offer, then upon the filing of such acceptance, the
29 city council may submit to the electors of such city, at a special
30 election called for that purpose or at any general election ~~of such city~~
31 ~~or of the State of Nebraska~~ within one hundred and twenty days after the

1 filing of such acceptance, the question whether such purchase shall be
2 made at the price stated on the ballot and the city council be authorized
3 to issue bonds of the kind or kinds stated in the proposition and in any
4 such amount as may be required to provide the necessary funds. The
5 proposition so submitted shall be carried if the majority of the electors
6 voting on such proposition shall vote in favor of such proposition.

7 (3) No election and no vote of electors shall be required upon the
8 question of acquiring by purchase, lease, or sublease any existing bridge
9 or issuing revenue bonds, in an amount not to exceed two million dollars
10 as authorized by section 14-1217, for the acquisition by purchase, lease,
11 or sublease of any existing bridge, if the city council determines by a
12 vote of a majority of its members to dispense with such election or vote
13 of electors as to such question.

14 (4) If the proposition shall be carried at the election, or if the
15 city council determines to dispense with such election, the tentative
16 acceptance of the owners of such bridge shall then become final and
17 binding upon such owners and may be enforced in any court of competent
18 jurisdiction.

19 (5) Such purchase may also be made subject to existing mortgages and
20 the assumption of outstanding bonds.

21 (6) If repairs, reconditioning, or reconstruction shall be necessary
22 to place any bridge so purchased or to be purchased in safe, efficient,
23 or convenient condition, the city council may issue additional revenue
24 bonds to provide funds for such purpose in an amount not to exceed
25 fifteen percent of the purchase price of such bridge.

26 (7) Any proposition submitted to the electors shall be published on
27 three consecutive days in the official newspaper of the city to be
28 completed not less than ten days before the date of the election.

29 (8) If the city council determines to dispense with such election or
30 vote of the electors, or if a proposition is submitted to a vote of the
31 electors and carried at such election, the city council may exercise all

1 power and authority reasonably necessary and incidental to the exercise
2 of the powers granted in this section.

3 **Sec. 14.** Section 14-1211, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
4 amended to read:

5 14-1211 (1) Within ninety days after a final condemnation award
6 pursuant to section 14-1207 has been made, the city council of such city
7 of the metropolitan class shall, if such city council elects to proceed
8 further, introduce an ordinance providing for the submission to the
9 electors of the city the question whether such award shall be confirmed
10 and the property be taken and bonds of the kind or kinds determined by
11 the city council, and stated upon the ballot, shall be issued in the
12 amount of the award.

13 (2) Such proposition shall be submitted within ninety days after the
14 ordinance becomes effective at a special election called for that purpose
15 or at any general ~~city or state~~ election τ and shall be carried if a
16 majority of the electors voting on such proposition shall vote in favor
17 of such proposition.

18 (3) No election and no vote of electors shall be required upon the
19 question of acquiring by condemnation any bridge or issuing revenue bonds
20 as authorized by section 14-1217 for the acquisition by condemnation of
21 any existing bridge, if the city council determines by a vote of a
22 majority of its members to dispense with such election or vote of
23 electors as to such question.

24 **Sec. 15.** Section 14-1216, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
25 amended to read:

26 14-1216 (1) To finance any of the purposes or powers provided for in
27 sections 14-1201 to 14-1252, the city council of a city of the
28 metropolitan class shall in the first instance determine whether any
29 purchase, condemnation, or construction authorized by such sections shall
30 be financed by bonds which are general obligations of the city and which
31 may also be supported by a lien or mortgage on the bridge itself or upon

1 the collection of tolls to be derived from the use of such bridge, or
2 both, or by revenue bonds as provided for in section 14-1217 and which
3 are charged solely against the revenue to be derived from such bridge
4 through the collection of tolls, or part one kind of bonds and part the
5 other.

6 (2) The city council shall not have authority to purchase, condemn,
7 nor construct any bridge nor to issue any bonds, except the preliminary
8 bonds specially authorized by section 14-1215, until first authorized by
9 the majority vote of the electors voting on such proposition, which
10 proposition shall indicate the method of acquiring the bridge and the
11 kind or kinds of bonds, at a special election called for that purpose or
12 at any general ~~city or state~~ election. No election and no vote of
13 electors shall be required upon the question of acquiring or constructing
14 any bridge or issuing revenue bonds as authorized by section 14-1217, for
15 the acquisition or construction of any bridge located more than one mile
16 from any existing bridge, other than a railroad bridge, if the city
17 council determines by a vote of the majority of its members to dispense
18 with such election or vote of electors as to such question.

19 (3) This grant of power to issue bonds is in addition to any other
20 power which may now have been or hereafter may be conferred upon such
21 city, and shall be free from the restrictions now imposed by the home
22 rule charter of the city upon the issuance of bonds and incurring of
23 indebtedness, and subject only to the provisions of the Constitution of
24 Nebraska.

25 (4) At an election under subsection (2) of this section, the
26 proposition shall be separate as to the bonds for each bridge to be
27 acquired or constructed and the amount of bonds may be either a specific
28 amount equal to the estimated total cost of every nature plus not to
29 exceed twenty-five percent, or may be general and authorize the issuance
30 of bonds in such amount as may be found necessary from time to time to
31 complete the acquisition, construction, and equipment of the bridge and

1 all costs incident to such bridge, or may be part one and part the other.

2 (5) For all purposes of financing, the total cost of any improvement
3 authorized by sections 14-1201 to 14-1252 may include every item of
4 expense in connection with the project, and among other items shall also
5 include the cost of acquiring every interest of every nature and of every
6 person in any existing bridge; the cost of constructing the
7 superstructure, roadway, and substructure of any bridge; the approaches
8 and avenues or rights-of-way of access to such bridge; necessary real
9 estate in connection with such bridge; toll houses; equipment of such
10 bridge; franchises, easements, rights, or damages incident to or
11 consequent upon the complete project expenses preliminary to
12 construction, including investigation and expenses incident to such
13 construction; prior to and during construction the proper traffic
14 estimates; interest upon bonds; and all such other expenses as after the
15 beginning of operation would be properly chargeable as cost of operation,
16 maintenance, and repairs.

17 **Sec. 16.** Section 14-1251, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
18 amended to read:

19 14-1251 (1) Elections on propositions arising in connection with the
20 exercise of any of the powers granted by sections 14-1201 to 14-1252 may
21 be submitted by the city council of a city of the metropolitan class to
22 the electors of such city at any general ~~, city, or state~~ election or at
23 any special election called for that purpose. Any proposition shall be
24 carried if a majority of the electors voting on such proposition vote in
25 favor of such proposition.

26 (2) No bridge shall be finally or irrevocably acquired, whether by
27 purchase, condemnation, or construction, until such action and the
28 necessary financing have been approved by a majority of the electors
29 voting on the proposition at a general ~~city or state~~ election or at a
30 special election called for that purpose or have been approved by the
31 city council, as authorized by such sections.

1 (3) Two or more propositions or questions may be submitted at the
2 same election and on the same ballot provided each is so presented that
3 the electors may vote separately upon each proposition. A vote of the
4 electors authorizing independent action shall be held to also authorize
5 joint action for the purpose so authorized but a vote on a proposition of
6 joint action shall not be held to authorize independent action.

7 (4) The city council is authorized to determine what shall be
8 included in the proposition to be stated in notices of election and upon
9 the ballots in its full discretion, except that any proposition must
10 indicate whether the bridge shall be acquired by purchase, by the
11 condemnation of an existing bridge, or by the construction of a new
12 bridge, and the kind of bonds to be issued to finance such bridge and the
13 amount of such bonds may be set forth in any manner authorized in such
14 sections.

15 **Sec. 17.** Section 32-402, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
16 amended to read:

17 32-402 Any primary election other than a primary election provided
18 for in sections 14-201 ~~14-204~~ and 32-401 shall be held on Tuesday four
19 weeks before the general election.

20 **Sec. 18.** Section 32-536, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
21 amended to read:

22 32-536 In a city of the metropolitan class, the mayor and seven city
23 council members shall be elected ~~to the city council~~ for terms of four
24 years at the general city election ~~in 1993~~ pursuant to section 14-201.
25 One city council member shall be nominated and elected from each of the
26 districts into which the city is divided pursuant to section 14-201.03.
27 The city council members shall meet the qualifications found in sections
28 14-204 and 14-230.

29 **Sec. 19.** Section 32-554, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
30 amended to read:

31 32-554 (1)(a) Any city not under a home rule charter, village,

1 county, or school district nominating and electing members to its
2 governing board at large may, either by majority vote of the governing
3 body or by petition of registered voters pursuant to subsection (2) of
4 this section, submit, at a general election, the question of nominating
5 and electing members to its governing board by district or ward.

6 (b) Any city not under a home rule charter, village, county having
7 not more than four hundred thousand inhabitants as determined by the most
8 recent federal decennial census, or school district nominating and
9 electing members to its governing board by district or ward may, either
10 by majority vote of the governing body or by petition of registered
11 voters pursuant to subsection (2) of this section, submit, at a general
12 election, the question of nominating and electing members to its
13 governing board at large.

14 (c) Any city of the first class, except a city having adopted the
15 commissioner or city manager plan of government, nominating and electing
16 members to its governing body by ward may, either by ordinance by
17 majority vote of the governing body or by petition of registered voters
18 pursuant to subsection (2) of this section, submit, at a general
19 election, the question of nominating and electing some of the members to
20 its governing body by ward and some at large. No more than four members
21 of the city council may be elected on an at-large basis, and at least
22 four members of the city council shall be elected by ward. The ordinance
23 of the governing body or petition shall specify the number of at-large
24 members to be elected. At the first election in which one or more at-
25 large members are to be elected to the city council, the members shall be
26 elected to serve for initial terms of office of the following lengths:
27 (i) If one at-large member is to be elected, he or she shall serve for a
28 four-year term; (ii) if two at-large members are to be elected, the
29 candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected to serve
30 for a four-year term and the other elected member shall be elected to
31 serve for a two-year term; (iii) if three at-large members are to be

1 elected, the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall
2 be elected to serve for four-year terms and the other elected member
3 shall be elected to serve for a two-year term; and (iv) if four at-large
4 members are to be elected, the two candidates receiving the highest
5 number of votes shall be elected to serve for four-year terms and the
6 other elected members shall be elected to serve for two-year terms.
7 Following the initial term of office, all at-large council members shall
8 be elected to serve for four-year terms. No candidate may file as both an
9 at-large candidate and a candidate by ward at the same election.

10 (2) Petitions for submission of the question shall be signed by
11 registered voters of the city, village, county, or school district
12 desiring to change the procedures for electing the governing board of the
13 city, village, county, or school district. The petition or petitions
14 shall be signed by registered voters equal in number to twenty-five
15 percent of the votes cast for the person receiving the highest number of
16 votes in the city, village, county, or school district at the preceding
17 general election for electing the last member or members to its governing
18 board. Each sheet of the petition shall have printed the full and correct
19 copy of the question as it will appear on the official ballot. The
20 petitions shall be filed with the county clerk or election commissioner
21 not less than seventy days prior to the date of the general election, and
22 no signatures shall be added or removed from the petitions after they
23 have been so filed. Petitions shall be verified as provided in section
24 32-631. If the petition or petitions are found to contain the required
25 number of valid signatures, the county clerk or election commissioner
26 shall place the question on a separate ballot to be issued to the
27 registered voters of the city, village, county, or school district
28 entitled to vote on the question.

29 (3)(a) Any city, village, county, or school district voting to
30 change from nominating and electing the members of its governing board by
31 district or ward to nominating and electing some or all of such members

1 at large shall notify the public and instruct the filing officer to
2 accept the appropriate filings on an at-large basis. Candidates to be
3 elected at large shall be nominated and elected on an at-large basis at
4 the next primary and general election following submission of the
5 question.

6 (b) Any city, village, county, or school district voting to change
7 from nominating and electing the members of its governing board at large
8 to nominating and electing by district or ward shall notify the public
9 and instruct the filing officer to accept all filings by district or
10 ward. Candidates shall be nominated and elected by district or ward at
11 the next primary and general election following submission of the
12 question. When district or ward elections have been approved by the
13 majority of the electorate, the governing board of any city, village,
14 county, or school district approving such question shall establish
15 districts substantially equal in population as determined by the most
16 recent federal decennial census except as provided in subsection (2) of
17 section 32-553.

18 (4) Except as provided in section ~~14-204~~ ~~14-201~~, each city not under
19 a home rule charter, village, county, and school district which votes to
20 nominate and elect members to its governing board by district or ward
21 shall establish districts or wards so that approximately one-half of the
22 members of its governing board may be nominated and elected from
23 districts or wards at each election. Districts or wards shall be created
24 not later than October 1 in the year following the general election at
25 which the question was voted upon. If the governing board fails to draw
26 district boundaries by October 1, the procedures set forth in section
27 32-555 shall be followed.

28 **Sec. 20.** Original sections 14-201, 14-202, 14-204, 14-205, 14-206,
29 14-207, 14-210, 14-217.01, 14-376, 14-521, 14-811, 14-1206, 14-1211,
30 14-1216, 14-1251, 32-402, 32-536, and 32-554, Reissue Revised Statutes of
31 Nebraska, and section 14-211, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,

1 2024, are repealed.