

AGENDA
MAPLEWOOD CITY COUNCIL –WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2024 @ 6:00 PM
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7601 MANCHESTER ROAD, MAPLEWOOD, MO 63143
OR VIA TELECONFERENCE

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89588450567?pwd=VFo1QkYxS0FHM2x6ZXhsNEY5c0Vmdz09>
Passcode: 730195
Dial in: (305) 224-1968
Webinar ID: 895 8845 0567

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Motion to Excuse Councilmember
4. City Charter Amendment Discussion
5. Adjournment

Memorandum



To: Mayor and City Council
From: Amber Withycombe, City Manager
Date: October 17, 2024
Re: Charter Amendment Work Session Discussion

As requested, this memo provides background information for your work session discussion on potentially amending the City’s Charter regarding our election process. The purpose of this session is to explore options for our local election procedures as requested by the Mayor during the Council’s September 24 meeting.

Primary Election Considerations

Article VIII, Section 8.1 of the Charter (enclosed) requires a primary election when three or more candidates file for an office. The same section of the Charter establishes provisions for special elections. Section 8.1 was adopted in 1990.

The St. Louis County Board of Elections maintains an online archive of election data back to 1997. The following chart shows information for Maplewood’s primary and special elections since 1997, with an approximate cost for each election:

Date	Election Type	Candidates	Ballots Cast	Cost
2/4/1997	Primary – Mayoral	3	1,072	~\$2,800
2/6/2001	Primary – Mayoral	3	964	~\$3,000
2/3/2009	Primary – Ward 1	3	104	\$5,863
8/8/2017	Special – Ward 3	3	313	\$4,233
8/3/2021	Special – Ward 2	1	92	\$2,500
2/7/2023	Special – Ward 1	1	52	\$5,426

Ranked Choice Voting Considerations

In his report to Council last month, the Mayor suggested removing the Charter requirement for a primary election. Later in the meeting, a public comment was offered by a resident to encourage the Council to maintain the primary election structure or potentially implement ranked choice voting.

The Mayor’s subsequent communication to Council Members, dated October 14, which includes information and data about ranked choice voting, is enclosed for your review.

As the Council discusses potential changes, it’s crucial to consider Missouri Amendment 7, which is on the ballot for November 5. If passed, this amendment could impact our options:

1. It would prohibit ranking candidates, limiting voters to a single vote per candidate or issue.

2. It would require the plurality winner of a party primary to be the single candidate in a general election.
3. An exception exists for nonpartisan municipal elections in cities with ordinances (as of November 5, 2024) requiring preliminary elections where multiple candidates advance.

If Amendment 7 is successful, the City would likely be able to maintain its current primary election system. However, the amendment would also likely prevent the City from adopting ranked choice voting or other alternative voting methods in the future that involve ranking candidates.

The full text of the Missouri Senate Joint Resolution No. 78 is enclosed.

Please don't hesitate to let me know what additional materials I can provide to inform the Council's discussion on this matter.

ARTICLE VIII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Sec. 8.1. City elections.

(a) *Regular elections.*

Primary—The regular city primary elections shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of February of each odd-numbered year. A primary election shall be held only for any office for which three or more candidates have filed. (If less than three people file for an office then the contest for that office shall not require a primary election.)

General—The regular general city elections shall be held on the first Tuesday in April in each odd-numbered year.

- (b) *Special elections.* The council may by resolution order special elections, fix the time for such elections, and provide for holding such elections.
- (c) *Conduct of elections.* All city elections shall be governed by the provisions of this Charter and of applicable state law. The council by ordinance may further regulate elections, subject to the provisions of the Charter and applicable state law.

(Ord. No. 4466, § 2, 9-11-1990)

Sec. 8.2. Nominations by petition.

- (a) *Nominations.* Nominations of candidates for all elective officers shall be by petition. Petitions for ward councilmen shall be signed by not less than 50 qualified voters who are entitled to vote for the candidate so nominated. Petitions for officials elected by the entire city shall be signed by not less than 150 qualified voters of the city. No voter shall sign more than one nominating petition for the same office, and should a voter do so, his signature shall be void except as to the first filed of the petitions signed by him for the office concerned. The signatures shall be executed in ink or indelible pencil. Each signer shall indicate next to his signature the date of his signing and the place of his residence, giving the street and number or other description sufficient to identify his place of residence. The council by ordinance shall designate the appropriate form for nominating petitions and for acceptance of nominations.
- (b) *Filing and acceptance.* All separate papers comprising a nominating petition shall be assembled and filed with the election authorities as one instrument, not earlier than the opening date provided by state law for filing a declaration of candidacy (to be measured from the date of the primary election for such elective office), and not later than the closing date provided by state law for filing a declaration of candidacy is filed (to be measured from the date of the primary election for such elective office). The election authorities shall make a record of the exact time when each petition is filed. No nominating petition shall be accepted unless accompanied by a signed acceptance of the nomination.
- (c) *Procedure after filing.* Within five working days after the filing of a nominating petition, the election authorities shall notify the candidate and the person who filed the petition whether or not it is sufficient. If a petition is found insufficient, the election authorities shall return it immediately to the person who filed it with a statement certifying wherein it is found insufficient. Within the regular time for filing petitions, such a petition may be amended and filed again as a new petition or a different petition may be filed for the same candidate. The election authorities shall keep on file all petitions found sufficient at least until the expiration of the term for which the candidates are nominated in those petitions.

(Ord. No. 4853, § I, 10-27-1998)

Sec. 8.3. Preparation of ballots.

The names of candidates shall be printed on the ballots without party designation. Except where the use of mechanical, electronic, or other device for voting or counting the votes makes it impossible, candidates' names shall be printed on the ballots in order of the filing of approved petitions, except as otherwise provided by the St. Louis County Board of Election Commissioners.

Sec. 8.4. Voting machines.

The council shall have power to provide for the use of mechanical, electronic, or other devices for voting or counting the votes not inconsistent with state law.

Sec. 8.5. Determination of election results.

- (a) *Number of votes.* In an election for mayor, every voter shall be entitled to vote for only one (1) candidate. In an election for councilman, every voter shall be entitled to vote for one (1) candidate for each seat on the council to be filled in his ward.
- (b) *Returns; canvass.* The city council shall canvas the election returns, and declare the results of any municipal election, primary, regular or special, at the first regular meeting to be held following such election. The two candidates receiving the highest number of votes in the primary election, in their respective contest, shall be the candidates in the general election. The candidates receiving the highest number of votes for each office in the general election shall be declared elected and inducted into office at that time.
- (c) *[Tie vote.]* If at any election there shall be no person elected to one or more council seats by reason of a tie vote, a runoff election between the candidates so tied shall be held within 42 days after certification of the election results. The incumbent shall remain in office until his successor has been duly elected and qualified.

Sec. 8.6. City council wards.

Within 120 days after the adoption of this Charter the city council shall by ordinance divide the city into three wards. Ward boundaries shall be established by ordinance following each decennial (ten-year) census prepared by or for the United States Government or at other more frequent intervals as may be determined by the council. Wards shall comprise compact and contiguous territory and shall contain, as nearly as possible, an equal number of inhabitants.

From: [Barry Greenberg](#)
To: [Matt Coriell](#); [Krista Garcia](#); [Eric Page](#); [Chasity Mattox](#); [Shawn Faulkingham](#); [Nicholas Homa](#)
Cc: [Amber Withycombe](#)
Subject: Charter Amendment Discussion
Date: Monday, October 14, 2024 2:39:27 PM
Attachments: [Ranked Choice Voting.docx](#)

Council,

Attached is an informative article on ranked choice voting. I am attaching it to this email because the approach can be confusing and I want any discussion that we have to be based on informed choices. If anyone has input on other voting methodologies, please share them with Council so that they can be evaluated for possible implementation by the voters.



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Can ranked-choice voting heal our poisoned politics?

The electoral reform also known as instant-runoff voting promises bridge-building and broad appeal instead of culture war and gridlock.

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A weekly newsletter featuring the biggest ideas from the smartest people

Fields marked with an * are required

It is arguably the most important single question in US politics today: How can the United States halt its downward spiral into extremism, gridlock and cross-partisan hatred?

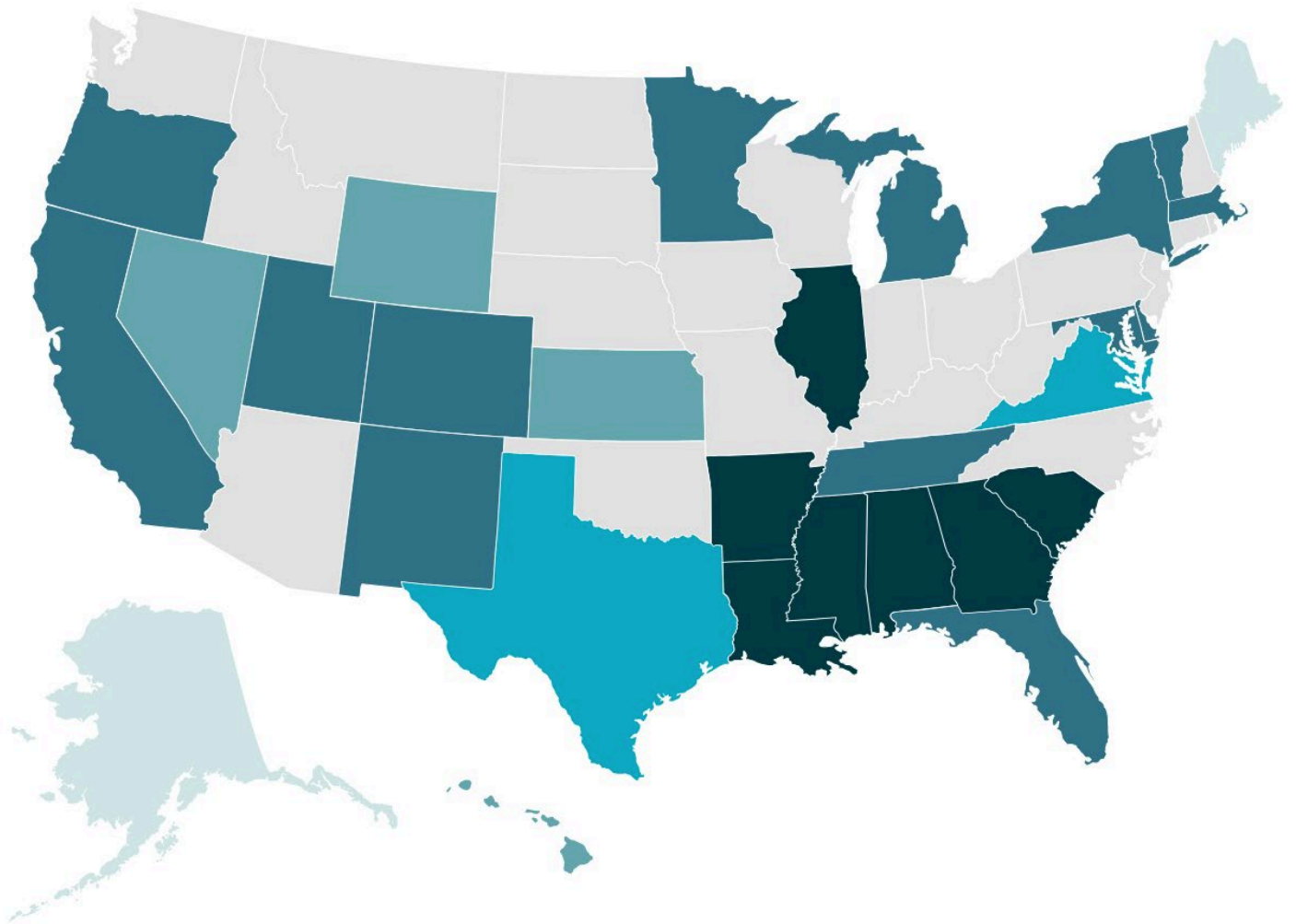
For many advocates, a critical piece of the answer is the electoral reform known as ranked-choice voting. “It reduces the incentive to be divisive as a strategy,” says Anna Kellar, director of the League of Women Voters of Maine and a leader in the 2016 drive that got the reform adopted in that state.

In fact, it turns the incentives around, says Kellar: Because a ranked-choice system automatically transfers people’s votes to their second, third or later choice of candidates if their first choice loses, candidates are forced to treat everyone as a potential supporter. The result, hopefully, will be campaigns that reward bridge-building and broad appeal instead of attack ads, culture wars and exciting the base — and in the process, de-inflate our politics.

That hope is one big reason why US foundations, philanthropists and individual donors have been pouring money into ranked-choice reform efforts for the better part of a decade. And it’s why ranked-choice voting, also known as instant-runoff voting, has already been adopted in dozens of US cities and states. These early adopters range in political affiliation from the 23 cities in ruby-red Utah that will start using ranked-choice voting in November, to the independent-friendly states of Maine and Alaska, to Democratic bastions such as San Francisco and Berkeley — and now New York City, which became by far the most populous member of the group when it used ranked-choice voting for the first time in its June 22 mayoral primary.

Ranked-choice voting is spreading rapidly in the US

- RCV used statewide and for presidential elections
- RCV used for 2020 presidential primaries
- RCV used/enacted for local elections
- RCV used for party elections
- RCV for military and overseas voting



In the past two decades, ranked-choice voting has spread from a single outpost in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to dozens of US cities and states — most of them within the past five years. (Source: Fairvote.org / Knowable Magazine)

Proponents have high hopes that this cross-partisan momentum will continue. “I think we’re going to see every jurisdiction using ranked-choice voting in 10 years,” declares Rob Richie, CEO of the ranked-choice research and advocacy organization [FairVote](#).

Top Stories

Yet that is hardly a foregone conclusion. Ranked-choice voting still feels new and strange to most Americans, and poses a host of questions. How does it work, for starters? Is it too complicated for voters to understand? Can it actually deliver on its promises? And does it have any hope of surviving in the current political climate?

Here’s what we know so far.

What is ranked-choice voting — and what’s the point?

Ranked-choice voting is neither new nor untried. The idea itself dates back at least to the 1850s, and it's been used for national elections in Australia and Ireland for a century now. Its prime motivation — leaving aside, for the moment, the promise of calming political waters — is to solve a specific set of problems that exist with “plurality” voting: the familiar system that has long been the norm in the United States, the United Kingdom and many other countries.

Plurality voting does have the virtue of simplicity: Whoever gets the most votes wins. But in close races it is vulnerable to the kind of third-party spoiler effect made infamous in the 2000 US presidential election: The tiny fraction of votes that went to activist and Green Party candidate Ralph Nader in Florida almost certainly cost Democrat Al Gore the state and the presidency. Many jurisdictions try to get around this issue by holding a runoff election between the top two vote-getters. But runoffs tend to be time-consuming, expensive and — because turnout is usually abysmal — decided by a small fraction of the total electorate.

Even worse, plurality voting can produce winners that most voters don't want: candidates who squeak into office only because two or more rivals split the opposition. Easily the most consequential recent example was the 2016 US presidential contest, when Donald Trump prevailed in the crowded Republican primaries with just 45 percent of his party's vote. Another was the 2010 election of Maine Governor Paul LePage, a divisive, confrontational figure who won a four-way race with 38 percent of the vote. And had the September 14 recall effort against California Governor Gavin Newsom not been defeated, he would have been replaced by Republican Larry Elder — whose polling average on election eve was less than 30 percent.

Reformers often argue that examples like these aren't anomalies — that the plurality system has increasingly turned negative campaigning and extremism into an effective campaign strategy. Get enough of your supporters excited, after all, and it doesn't matter how many other voters you alienate: A non-majority win is still a win.

But the system can also undermine even the best winner's legitimacy, says Jason Grenn, director of the ranked-choice advocacy organization Alaskans for Better Elections. When his state adopted ranked-choice voting in 2020, he says, Alaska hadn't elected a US Senator with more than 50 percent of the vote since 2002. “It's a tough message for a winner to say, ‘OK, I'm going to DC with 40 percent approval but 60 percent of my district didn't support me,’” he says.

Ranked-choice voting is designed to solve all these problems by producing officeholders who have majority support. Here's how it works:

First, voters are asked to rank the candidates by preference on election day, instead of choosing just one. (And no, you can't leave middle rankings blank and mark your least-favored choice as last.) If the tally then shows that someone got more than half of the first-choice votes, as Republican Susan Collins did in Maine's ranked-choice 2020 election for the US Senate, they win outright and everything proceeds as before.

But if no candidate gets more than half of the first-choice votes, the counting goes into instant-runoff mode: The candidate with the lowest total is eliminated — think Nader (and others) in the Florida 2000 example — and their votes are reallocated to their supporters' second choices. This elimination process then repeats through as many rounds as needed, until one candidate passes 50 percent. New York's crowded Democratic primary turned out to be a classic example: Candidate Eric Adams went from 30.7 percent of the vote in the first round to 50.4 percent and victory in the eighth.

Ranked-choice voting (here called instant-runoff voting) tries to produce winners who have majority support. If no one wins a majority of the vote outright, then the candidate with the lowest total is eliminated and their votes are reallocated to their supporters' second choices. This elimination process then repeats until someone's vote total passes 50 percent. (Credit: MPR NEWS)

Will voters accept ranked-choice voting — or even understand it?

The elaborate ranked-choice counting process is no problem for computers; most of the major voting-machine manufacturers now offer it as an option. But there's long been a worry that the ranked-choice approach will seem incomprehensible to the voters themselves — especially those who are poorer, less educated or members of minority

groups. If so, the reform would only end up deepening the inequities that already exist. Certainly, that charge was freely tossed around during the New York City primary campaign.

But academic studies tell a different story. In a 2019 paper comparing [California cities that did and did not use ranked-choice voting](#), for example, political scientist Todd Donovan and his coauthors found that almost 88 percent of the respondents still rated the instructions as “easy” or “somewhat easy.” (Slightly more older voters in the ranked-choice cities did have trouble understanding the election system.) And more to the point, says Donovan, of Western Washington University in Bellingham, “we didn’t find any racial or ethnic differences.”

In 2021, University of Iowa political scientist Joseph Coll published [similar results based on data from Alaska, Hawaii, Kansas and Wyoming](#), the four states that used ranked-choice voting for their 2020 Democratic presidential primaries. (They didn’t get much attention because now-President Joseph Biden was already the presumptive nominee.) And in [an exit poll from this year’s New York City primary](#), 95 percent of the voters found the ballot simple to complete — and 77 percent said they wanted to use ranked-choice voting in future elections.

But the New York exit poll also showed that only 83 percent of the voters ranked two or more candidates. Although that number is quite a bit higher than in most other US elections using ranked-choice voting, it does illustrate another frequent criticism of the system. When voters aren’t required to rank *all* of the candidates (as they are for some races in Australia), their ballots can become “exhausted” and no longer count in later rounds of the tally.

And if enough ballots meet that fate, then it’s theoretically possible to produce a winner who doesn’t actually have support from a majority of voters.

It’s not clear how significant this exhausted-ballot problem is in practice. But the issue underscores how much the ranked-choice system is asking of voters: They’re supposed to form opinions about a whole list of candidates when they frequently have trouble picking even one. And it likewise underscores a broader point about ranked-choice voting. As Donovan puts it, “jurisdictions need to do some voter education to make it work.”

This was definitely a priority for Kellar’s group in Maine, both before and after their 2016 victory. “We held a whole bunch of events with our local breweries, where people could taste three or four of the beers and rank them in their order of preference,” says Kellar. “And then we would go through the rounds to see which beer would be good for the majority of people, and show the counting process in a way that people understood.” The group did similar exercises at county fairs using pizza and ice cream, and even made a video of people dressed up as ballots, moving around to show how the rounds worked.

“Somebody tries to explain ranked-choice voting to you in words and it sounds like the most complicated thing ever,” says Kellar. “But if you do it with ice cream, people realize that ranking is something that we do every day.”

Will ranked-choice voting really heal political divisions?

Maybe. [Ranked-choice campaigns certainly seem less negative](#), according to a 2016 survey that Donovan coauthored with University of Iowa political scientists Caroline Tolbert and Kellen Gracey. And this perception of heightened civility was confirmed in a novel way this year, when political scientist Martha Kropf of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte published [an analysis of Twitter comments and newspaper stories about ranked-choice contests](#). Kropf found that the ratio of positive to negative words in news stories was significantly higher than in regular elections.

This heightened civility, along with decreased concerns about acting as a spoiler, may in turn make ranked-choice campaigns feel more welcoming to [women](#) or [minority candidates](#): Studies show that the system is generally not a barrier for them, and in some cases may even have boosted their chances.

Still, says Benjamin Reilly, a political scientist who studies voting systems at the University of Western Australia in Perth, the ranked-choice approach doesn’t automatically make people nicer. Even after a century of it in Australia, he says, “we have a highly adversarial system with all the usual theater of politicians shouting at each other.” There were also plenty of verbal punches thrown in Maine’s 2020 Senate campaign, and in this year’s New York primary.

Ranked-choice voting (here called instant-runoff voting) can also be used for contests that decide several seats at once, such as races for city councils or school boards. The counting is more involved, but the goal is to produce a slate of winners that roughly matches the partisan makeup of the electorate. For example, if there were five seats at play in a district that was divided 60-40 between Democrats and Republicans, the current system would usually elect five Democrats — effectively leaving two-fifths of the electorate with no representation. The ranked-choice system would come closer to three Democrats and two Republicans. (Credit: MPR NEWS)

But ranked-choice voting's promise of reducing division and extremism is quite real, says Reilly; he found compelling evidence for the effect with his thesis work in Papua New Guinea.

"The place is extremely fragmented along ethnic lines, with all these micro-clans and tribes," he says. Yet back in the 1960s, when the area was under Australian colonial administration and used its ranked-choice rules, elections were surprisingly civil. "The studies from that period all talked about how there were these deals being done between tribal and clan groups to get second votes" from one another's supporters, Reilly says.

But with independence in 1975, he says, Papua New Guinea adopted US-style plurality voting instead. By the time Reilly started his research there in the 1990s, he says, "the incentives to do deals and trade-offs had completely disappeared. People were winning elections with five and six percent of the vote, because there were 60 candidates standing sometimes." And with officials taking office with almost no support, he says, "that was leading to a lot of tribal violence, and other problems."

Things calmed down a bit after 2003, when Papua New Guinea went back to ranked-choice voting and the dealmaking reemerged. It remains a deeply troubled country, says Reilly, who has found comparable alliance-building in Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, Fiji and other divided regions that have adopted ranked-choice voting. "But it was a really interesting natural experiment of what can happen under two different electoral systems."

Similar, if less dramatic, alliances have already started popping up in Maine, San Francisco and other US ranked-choice jurisdictions. A particularly well-publicized example came late in the New York primary campaign, when candidates Andrew Yang and Kathryn Garcia seem to have tried to counter front-runner Adams by appearing together, with Yang asking his voters to rank them first and second.

It didn't work: Adams won anyway. But even so, says Richie, look for more such collaborative campaigning as politicians get used to the logic of ranked-choice voting. In his own town of Takoma Park, Maryland, where it's been used since 2007, "I've seen candidates walk past a yard sign for their opponent and knock on the door to talk to someone anyway," he says. Getting one more second-choice ranking can matter.

That said, however, there remains one crucial question that only time can answer.

New York’s first ranked-choice election went through eight rounds

CANDIDATE	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3	ROUND 4	ROUND 5	ROUND 6	ROUND 7	ROUND 8
Eric L. Adams	30.7%	30.8%	30.8%	31.2%	31.7%	34.6%	40.5%	50.4%
Maya D. Wiley	21.4%	21.4%	21.4%	22.0%	22.4%	26.1%	29.1%	—
Kathryn A. Garcia	19.6%	19.6%	19.6%	19.9%	20.5%	24.4%	30.5%	49.6%
Andrew Yang	12.2%	12.2%	12.3%	12.6%	13.0%	14.8%	—	—
Scott M. Stringer	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.7%	6.1%	—	—	—
Dianne Morales	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%	3.2%	3.3%	—	—	—
Raymond J. McGuire	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.8%	3.0%	—	—	—
Shaun Donovan	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.6%	—	—	—	—
Aaron S. Foldenauer	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	—	—	—	—	—
Art Chang	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	—	—	—	—	—
Paperboy Love Prince	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	—	—	—	—	—
Joycelyn Taylor	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	—	—	—	—	—
Isaac Wright Jr.	0.2%	0.2%	—	—	—	—	—	—
Write-ins	7.1%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Inactive ballots	0	752	1,207	5,314	8,062	26,445	65,714	140,202

Although Eric Adams had the most votes after the first round of counting in New York City’s 2021 Democratic mayoral primary, most voters preferred someone else. But his support proved broad enough to keep him in the lead as trailing candidates were eliminated and their votes redistributed. After eight rounds, Adams could claim majority support. (Image and data: [Projects.TheCity.NYC](#) / [Knowable Magazine](#))

Can ranked-choice voting survive in the United States?

There is still ample reason for skepticism on that score — not least because ranked-choice voting has already failed here once. Versions of the system were used for local elections in some two dozen US cities during the first half of the 20th century, only to be repealed almost everywhere as party bosses fought back against their loss of control. By 1962, the sole survivor was Cambridge, Massachusetts; it would stand alone until 2004, when San Francisco became the first city in the modern era to start routine use of ranked-choice voting.

The current wave of adoptions hasn’t always gone smoothly, either. In 2020, for example, Massachusetts voters rejected ranked-choice voting by close to a 10-percentage-point margin. “Voters didn’t see a clear problem it was solving, says Tyler Fisher, senior director of policy and partnerships at [Unite America](#), a Denver-based nonprofit that supports a variety of electoral reforms.

Then, too, today’s revival of ranked-choice voting comes at a time of profound mistrust in our election system in general — by both sides.

In New York, for example, when Eric Adams denounced the Yang-Garcia alliance as an attempt to undermine candidates of color like him, he was reflecting a widespread worry that ranked-choice voting would harm minority representation. That accusation could have become incendiary indeed if Garcia had edged past Adams in later rounds, as she almost did.

And substantial portions of the right still denounce ranked-choice voting as some kind of leftist plot. According to [a 2019 report on ranked-choice voting from the Heritage Foundation](#), a prominent hard-right think tank, “So-called reformers want to change process rules so they can manipulate election outcomes to obtain power.”

Yet opponents can be persuaded. In Utah, for example, lobbyist and lifelong Republican Stan Lockhart remembers being a skeptic back in 2002, when his party first used ranked-choice voting in its state nominating convention. But by 2017, when advocates asked if he would help them take the reform statewide, he took the job as an ardent convert. What helped change his mind, says Lockhart, who now works through the nonpartisan advocacy group [Utah Ranked Choice Voting](#), was seeing the reform’s effects on his own party. “We had less infighting, less attacking one another, less politics of personal destruction, and more focus on issues,” he says. “I liked that. There was the opportunity for a candidate to get a majority of support. I liked that.”

And, says Lockhart, “I liked that a voter got to more fully express their will.”

This article originally appeared in [Knowable Magazine](#), a nonprofit publication dedicated to making scientific knowledge accessible to all. [Sign up for Knowable Magazine’s newsletter](#).

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

[TRULY AGREED TO AND FINALLY PASSED]

SENATE SUBSTITUTE FOR

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 78

102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2024

3502S.03T

JOINT RESOLUTION

Submitting to the qualified voters of Missouri, an amendment repealing sections 2 and 3 of article VIII of the Constitution of Missouri, and adopting three new sections in lieu thereof relating to elections.

Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring therein:

That at the next general election to be held in the
2 state of Missouri, on Tuesday next following the first Monday
3 in November, 2024, or at a special election to be called by
4 the governor for that purpose, there is hereby submitted to
5 the qualified voters of this state, for adoption or
6 rejection, the following amendment to article VIII of the
7 Constitution of the state of Missouri:

Section A. Sections 2 and 3, article VIII, Constitution
2 of Missouri, are repealed and three new sections adopted in
3 lieu thereof, to be known as sections 2, 3, and 24, to read as
4 follows:

Section 2. **[All]** **Only** citizens of the United States,
2 including occupants of soldiers' and sailors' homes, over
3 the age of eighteen who are residents of this state and of
4 the political subdivision in which they offer to vote are
5 entitled to vote at all elections by the people, if the
6 election is one for which registration is required if they
7 are registered within the time prescribed by law, or if the
8 election is one for which registration is not required, if

EXPLANATION-Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in this bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

9 they have been residents of the political subdivision in
10 which they offer to vote for thirty days next preceding the
11 election for which they offer to vote: Provided however, no
12 person who has a guardian of his or her estate or person by
13 reason of mental incapacity, appointed by a court of
14 competent jurisdiction and no person who is involuntarily
15 confined in a mental institution pursuant to an adjudication
16 of a court of competent jurisdiction shall be entitled to
17 vote, and persons convicted of felony, or crime connected
18 with the exercise of the right of suffrage may be excluded
19 by law from voting.

Section 3. 1. All elections by the people shall be by
2 **paper** ballot or by any mechanical method prescribed by law.

3 **2. Voters shall have only a single vote for each issue**
4 **on which such voter is eligible to vote. Voters shall have**
5 **the same number of votes for an office as the number of open**
6 **seats to be elected to such office at that election. Under**
7 **no circumstance shall a voter be permitted to cast a ballot**
8 **in a manner that results in the ranking of candidates for a**
9 **particular office. Notwithstanding any provision of this**
10 **subsection to the contrary, this subsection shall not apply**
11 **to any nonpartisan municipal election held in a city that**
12 **had an ordinance in effect as of November 5, 2024, that**
13 **permits voters to cast more than a single vote for each**
14 **issue or candidate on which such voter is eligible to vote.**

15 **3.** All election officers shall be sworn or affirmed
16 not to disclose how any voter voted; provided, that in cases
17 of contested elections, grand jury investigations and in the
18 trial of all civil or criminal cases in which the violation
19 of any law relating to elections, including nominating
20 elections, is under investigation or at issue, such officers

21 may be required to testify and the ballots cast may be
22 opened, examined, counted, and received as evidence.

**Section 24. 1. The person receiving the greatest
2 number of votes at a primary election as a party candidate
3 for an office shall be the only candidate for that party for
4 the office at the general election. The name of such
5 candidate shall be placed on the official ballot at the
6 general election unless removed or replaced as provided by
7 law.**

**8 2. The person receiving the greatest number of votes
9 at the general election shall be declared the winner.**

**10 3. Notwithstanding any provision of this section to
11 the contrary, this section shall not apply to any
12 nonpartisan municipal election held in a city that had an
13 ordinance in effect as of November 5, 2024, that requires a
14 preliminary election at which more than one candidate
15 advances to a subsequent election.**

Section B. Pursuant to chapter 116, and other
2 applicable constitutional provisions and laws of this state
3 allowing the general assembly to adopt ballot language for
4 the submission of this joint resolution to the voters of
5 this state, the official summary statement of this
6 resolution shall be as follows:

7 "Shall the Missouri Constitution be amended to:

- 8 • Make the Constitution consistent with state
9 law by only allowing citizens of the United
10 States to vote;
- 11 • Prohibit the ranking of candidates by
12 limiting voters to a single vote per candidate
13 or issue; and

- 14 • Require the plurality winner of a political
- 15 party primary to be the single candidate at a
- 16 general election?".

