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# MINNETONKA VOTES ON RANKED CHOICE VOTING

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**This November, voters will be asked to consider adopting ranked choice voting for city elections**



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# What is ranked choice voting?



Ranked choice voting (RCV) is a voting system that eliminates the need for a primary election because voters are asked to rank candidates in order of preference – first choice, second choice and third choice, etc.



Ballots may be counted in one or more rounds. The first round is tallied using first-preference votes only. If a candidate wins a majority of the first-preference votes in the first round, that candidate is the winner.



If no candidate wins a majority of first-preference votes, the candidate with the fewest first-preference votes is eliminated, and all first-preference votes for the eliminated candidate are also eliminated. The ballot then proceeds to a second round.



In the second round, the votes of everyone who ranked the eliminated candidate as their first preference are redistributed among the remaining candidates, based on those voters' second preferences.



The process is repeated until one candidate has won a majority of all unexhausted\* ballots.

## **\*What is an exhausted ballot?**

Ballot exhaustion occurs when all the candidates marked on a ballot have been eliminated in prior rounds. For example, a voter might rank only three out of six candidates. If all the voter's choices are eliminated in the first three rounds of tabulating votes, the voter's ballot is exhausted and won't factor into subsequent rounds.

The winning candidate is determined by the majority of ballots that have not been exhausted.

# November 2020 ballot question

*Shall the Minnetonka City Charter be amended to adopt Ranked Choice Voting as the method for electing the mayor and city councilmembers without a separate primary election and with ballot format and rules for counting votes to be adopted by ordinance?*

## If you vote yes

You're in favor of:

- Using ranked choice voting to elect the mayor and council members, beginning in November 2021.
- The elimination of primary elections for mayor and city council elections.

## If you vote no

You're in favor of:

- Minnetonka continuing to use the current election system, which asks voters to vote for one candidate per office.
- The continuing use of primary elections whenever more than two candidates run for mayor or a particular city council seat.

## Potential financial impact







If ranked choice voting is adopted, city staff anticipate the need for additional administrative support and educational materials. Budget increases incurred by these additions would be subject to city council approval.

Adoption of ranked choice voting would eliminate primary elections when two or more candidates run for a particular seat, resulting in cost savings. The savings depend on whether the seat is city-wide, or represents a single ward.

## Please remember

If Minnetonka voters adopt ranked choice voting, it will only impact mayor and city council elections. It will not change the way you vote for school board, county, state or federal offices.

# Why is ranked choice voting on the 2020 ballot?

-  **September 2019:** Residents asked the city council to implement RCV for city elections. The city council referred the issue to the charter commission for study.
-  **November 2019-March 2020:** The charter commission began to study RCV.
-  **April 2020:** Residents asked the city council to move the charter amendment process forward.
-  **June 2020:** The council adopted an ordinance to amend the city's charter to require the use of RCV for city elections. As required by law, the ordinance was submitted to the charter commission for review.
-  **June-July 2020:** The charter commission held virtual meetings to receive information from local, county and state elections officials, review budget projections, study scholarly articles on RCV, and listen to public comment.
-  **July 2020:** The charter commission rejected the ordinance and asked the council not to adopt ranked choice voting.
-  **August 2020:** The city council voted to place the issue on the November 2020 ballot to allow Minnetonka voters to decide whether to adopt RCV for city elections.



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