

2017. RCV by the Numbers - Minneapolis

By every measure, Ranked Choice Voting earned voters' support in the recent Minneapolis municipal election. The numbers tell the story and detail how RCV overwhelmingly met voters' expectations.

SUMMARY

- 43 percent of voters turned out
 - 92 percent of voters found RCV simple to use
 - 87 percent of voters ranked their ballots
 - 84 percent of voters said they like and want to continue using RCV
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KEY FINDINGS

- Turnout in Minneapolis was 105,928 (43 percent) – the highest for a municipal election in 20 years and a more than 32 percent increase over the relatively high turnout in 2013.
- Voters demonstrated a deep and thorough understanding of Ranked Choice Voting: 87 percent ranked a second choice in the mayoral race and 73 percent ranked all three of their available choices in the mayoral race.
- Mayor Jacob Frey, who won by building a broad coalition of first, second and third choice support, was present on 52 percent of all ballots.
- High rates of ranking consistently occurred across the competitive, multi-candidate City Council and Park Board races, including in the lower-income and highly diverse Ward 4.

Race	Ranked 2	Ranked 3
Park Board At-Large	78%	64%
Ward 1 City Council	72%	41%
Ward 3 City Council	80%	55%
Ward 4 City Council	70%	50%
Ward 11 City Council	78%	53%

- Minneapolis leadership is more diverse than ever:
 - A gender-balanced city council (eight men, five women) was elected.
 - The first Somali-American and Latina members elected to the council were reelected, and the first two transgender council members were elected. People of color now represent nearly 40 percent of the council.

- A Somali-American and African American were elected to the Park Board.
- **The valid ballot rate was an impressive 99.96 percent, demonstrating high levels of voter confidence and proficiency in ranking their ballots.**
- Overall, 11 races went to a runoff (or reallocation) – mayoral race; Park Board Districts 1, 3, 6 and At-Large; and city council races in Wards 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, and 11. Of these 11 races, 3 seats were open. In the 8 seats with an incumbent, challengers won 4.
- In competitive council races that were decided by second- and third-choice votes, we saw the highest rates of increased voter turnout:

Ward	2013 Council Votes	2017 Council Votes	Increase
1	5618	8734	55%
3	6091	9592	57%
4	3819	5263	38%
5	3499	4216	20%
11	7346	9160	25%

- **This year, women and/or people of color ran competitively in nearly every race.**
 - In 18 of the 22 races across the city, a woman and/or person of color either won or ran a competitive campaign.
 - A woman or person of color won in 12 of the 22 races.
- **A whopping 92 percent of polled voters said they found RCV very simple, or somewhat simple to use, according to an exit poll conducted by Edison Research.**
 - While younger voters aged 18-34 (96 percent) found RCV simplest to use, 86 percent of voters aged 65 and older said they found it simple as well.
 - Income and education did not impact ease of RCV use:
 - 92 percent of voters *with* a college education and 92 percent of voters *without higher education* found RCV to be simple.
 - 93 percent of voters with an income above \$100,000 and 91 percent of voters with an income under \$100,000 found RCV to be easy.
 - 89 percent of voters of color found RCV to be simple, finally putting to rest the concern that communities of color would find RCV difficult.
- 77 percent of polled voters across all age, income, education and ethnic groups said they were familiar with RCV before going to the polls, demonstrating the importance and success of the outreach and education efforts undertaken by FairVote Minnesota, the City of Minneapolis, candidates and the media to prepare voters for Election Day.
- **RCV fostered more civil campaigns.** An overwhelming 93 percent of polled voters felt that candidates did *not* spend most of their time criticizing opponents. 88 percent of voters

were also satisfied with the candidates for mayor which may be due in part to the high level of civility the voters experienced. The negative literature that was produced by independent expenditure groups on behalf of various council candidates backfired.

- **Voters like it: 84 percent of all voters want to continue to use RCV in future municipal elections and 70 percent would like to see it used for state elections.**
 - High levels of support for RCV in Minneapolis exists among older, nonwhite, lower income and less educated voters, (people whom critics claimed wouldn't understand or like RCV). The demographic breakouts for those who said they want to see RCV continue to be used in future city elections includes:
 - 70 percent of those aged 65 and older
 - 75 percent of people of color
 - 84 percent of people without a college degree
 - 82 percent of those earning less than \$50,000
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Prepared by FairVote Minnesota Foundation, January 2017

Sources:

- *Election Results provided by the City of Minneapolis Elections Department at <http://vote.minneapolismn.gov>*
 - *Exit Poll conducted by Edison Research. The poll was conducted in-person at 12 randomly selected voting precincts among 1,874 Minneapolis voters, using a weighted design to ensure an accurate representation of all voters. The margin of error at the 95 percent confidence level for the full Minneapolis sample of voters is +/-3.*
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Top 6

Ranked Choice Voting

Points to Share

From the 2017
Minneapolis Municipal
Election

1

Polled Voters who found
Ranked Choice Voting
simple:

Including:
89%

92%

of Voters of Color, finally putting to rest the concern
that communities of color would find RCV difficult

2

Voters
who
ranked
their
ballots:

87%

3

Voters
who
turned
out:

43%

(Highest in more than 20 years)

4

Voters who want to
continue using RCV

In Municipal Elections:

84%

Statewide:

70%

5

Percent
with a
Valid
Ballot

99.96%

6



2017 saw the election of
Minneapolis'
most diverse
City Council ever



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