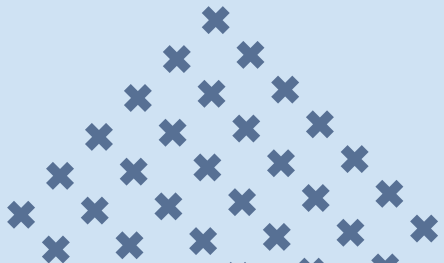


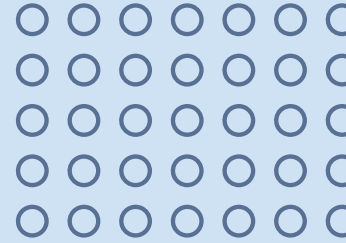


RANKED CHOICE VOTING

**A Proposal to Amend the Charter for the
City of San José**

Revised August 9th, 2021



Three large, overlapping circles on the left side of the page. The top circle is light blue, the middle one is yellow, and the bottom one is orange. They overlap in a vertical stack.

01

WHAT IS RANKED CHOICE VOTING?

A decorative dashed red arc at the bottom right corner of the page.

Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) **consolidates candidate voting into one election**, eliminating need for a primary *and* general election.

How it Works:

1. Using a ranked ballot, voters have the ability to rank preferences of candidate.
2. Candidates who do not meet minimum threshold or have the least votes are dropped.
3. Votes that went to dropped candidate go to voters' second preference.
4. Process continues until one candidate remains.





MEANINGFUL VOTE

Allows voters to choose candidates who best reflect their values without feeling like they are wasting a vote.



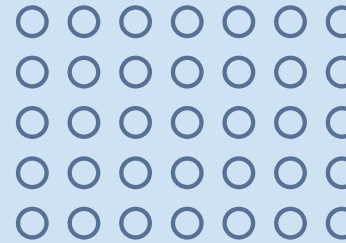
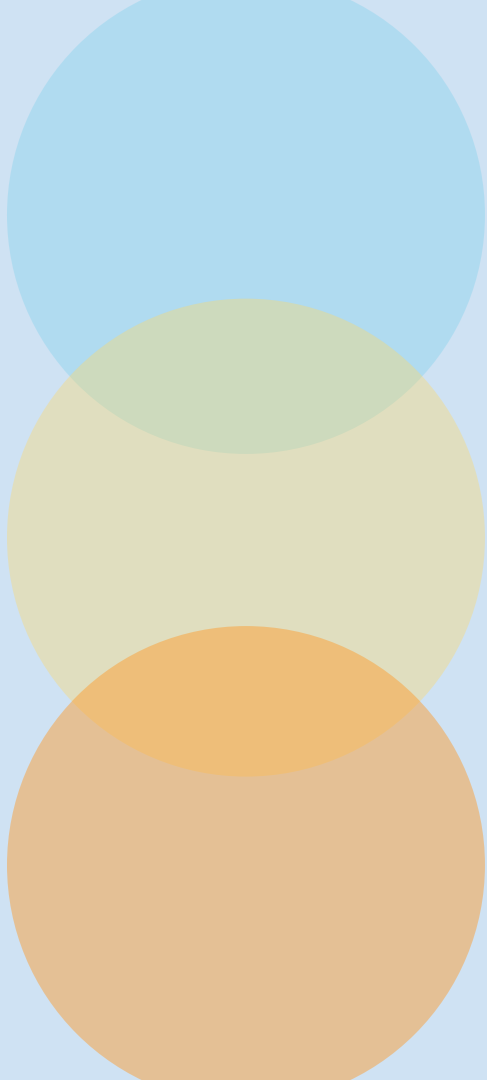
REDUCING COSTS

Eliminating the need for two elections saves on money and time, allowing a diverse range of candidates to run, and an overall better voter experience.



INCREASING VOTER TURNOUT

RCV enables voters to focus on one consolidated election and cast votes for meaningful votes for candidates. Candidates also have more ability to do voter outreach.



02

**UPDATED RCV
RECOMMENDATION**



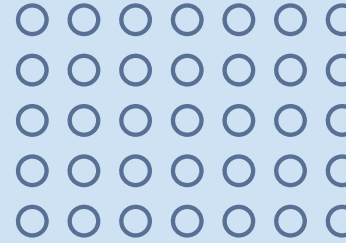
UPDATED RCV RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. Modeled after Oakland's charter language.**
 - a. Clarifies vote counting procedures
 - b. Candidate ties resolved by random lot
 - c. Post-election reports for transparency
 - d. Creates contingencies in event of insufficient technology

- 2. Removes language about minimum threshold**

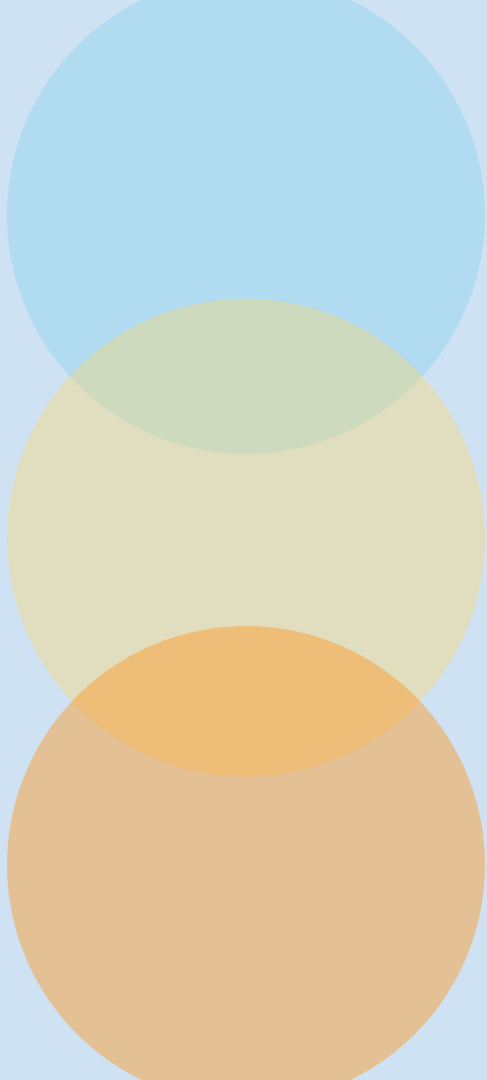
- 3. Goal for initiating RCV would be 2024**



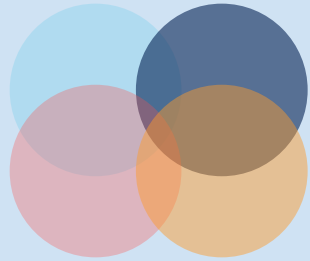


03

REFLECTING ON PUBLIC FEEDBACK

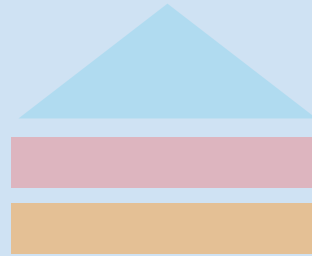


A majority of written feedback and public comment we received was *in support* of RCV. Sample positive comments include:



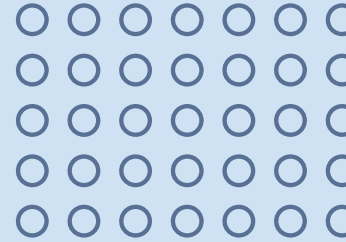
Representation

RCV gives more opportunities for BIPOC & marginalized communities to get elected.



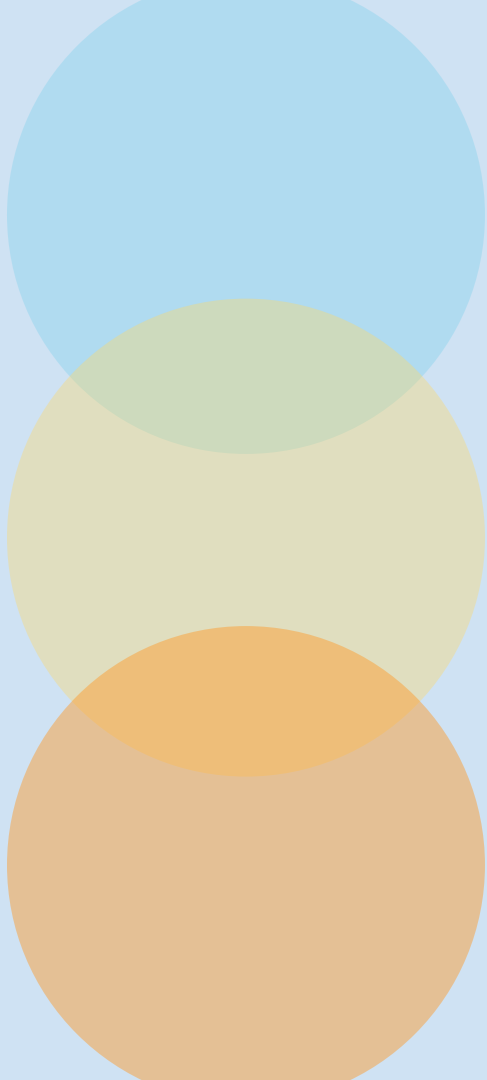
Reducing Costs

Consolidating the election cycle through RCV reduces costs for candidates and increases accessibility in running for office.



04

ADDRESSING THE OPPOSITION



01

RCV IS INACCESSIBLE + CONFUSING TO VOTERS

Concern: RCV can be confusing to understand, having a negative impact on typically disenfranchised voters.

Data from **2015 Bay Area RCV Study**¹:

- Across nearly all demographics (age, race, education, income level) **80%** of respondents reported that RCV was **easy to understand**.
- Only 18-29 age group reported < 80% (**79%**)

02

RCV ALLOWS FOR CANDIDATES TO “INFLUENCE” VOTERS & SWAY ELECTIONS

Concern #1: Collusion Amongst Candidates

- RCV’s voting model encourages collaboration between candidates
 - ex: **2018 SF Mayoral Race Candidates** Jane Kim & Mark Leno **endorse each other** ahead of the election.
 - Collaboration is a *feature* of the system, not a bug.

Concern #2: Candidates Can Manipulate Results

- ***Elections are political.*** Efforts to manipulate voter choices (e.g. running spoiler candidates) will always be present.
- While not immune, RCV is structured in a way that **makes it difficult to “cheat” or gain advantage** in election results.

03

RCV DOES NOT REFLECT THE WILL OF THE VOTERS

Concern: Winners from RCV elections are not chosen by which candidate received the most first-choice votes.

- This is true. RCV focuses on which candidate receives the **most *total* votes**.
- Regardless, **97% of RCV elections** are won by candidates receiving **most first-choice votes**.¹
- Voters **can still show lack of support** or disinterest for a candidate **by not ranking them**.

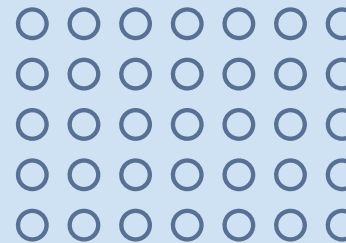


1. Fair Vote RCV Elections Database, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1U6viuXfay323Gl6zkH5itwmrUIUo9rAzalK_ntu-ZY/edit?usp=sharing, accessed August 4, 2021.

04 RCV IS NOT A MAJORITY SYSTEM

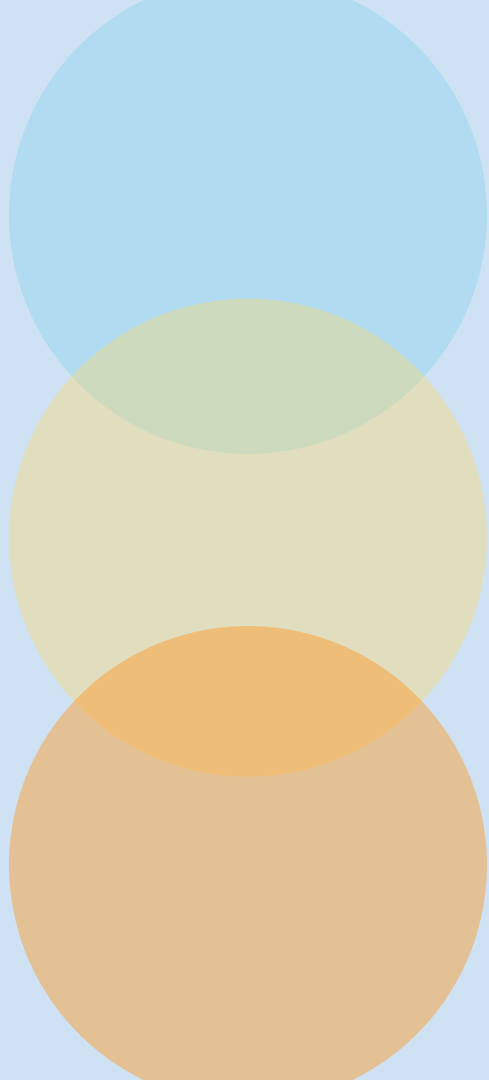
Concern: Ultimate winners in RCV do not have to receive majority of *all* votes to win.

- This is also true. By consolidating the election cycle, **ultimate winners** have to receive a majority of **all *continuing* votes** to win.
- Even in traditional voting systems, the **top-two winners** in a primary election **may not be voted for by a majority population.**



04

CONCLUSION



The Subcommittee **still recommends** the adoption of **Ranked-Choice Voting**, with updated changes.

Ranked-Choice Voting:

- **Reduces obstacles** for good candidates to run for office, and results in more women and people of color getting elected.
- **Promotes civility** among candidates and finding common ground.
- **Increases voter turnout** by allowing voters and candidates to focus on one consolidated election.
- **Allows voters to choose** their best candidate, not just the least worst!