

FAIR ✓ **VOTE**
MINNESOTA



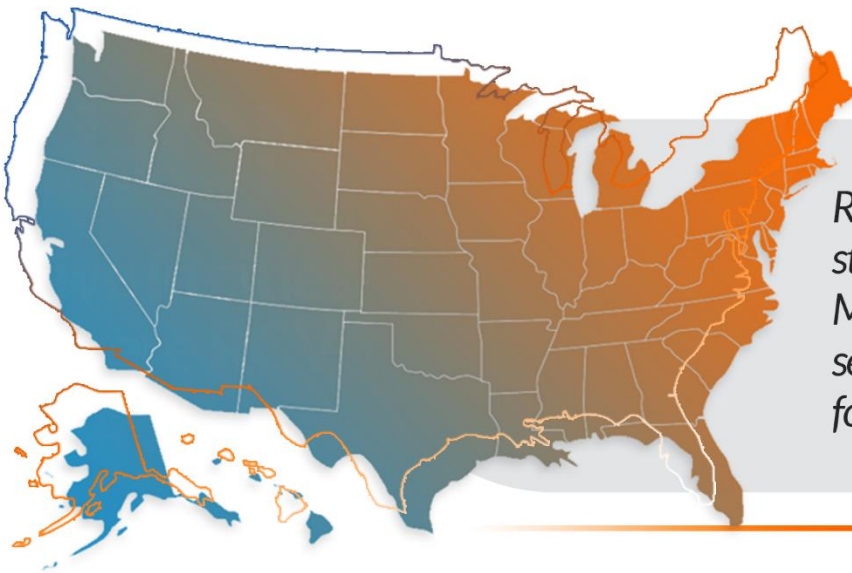
Ranked Choice Voting

in Minnesota Cities

Fact Sheet

Ranked Choice Voting

- ✓ is a proven reform that is **easy to use**
- ✓ gives voters **more choice and more power**
- ✓ and **improves outcomes for both candidates and voters historically underrepresented in the political process.**



RCV has been tested in cities and states across the country, and the Minnesota Supreme Court and several federal district courts have found it to be constitutional.

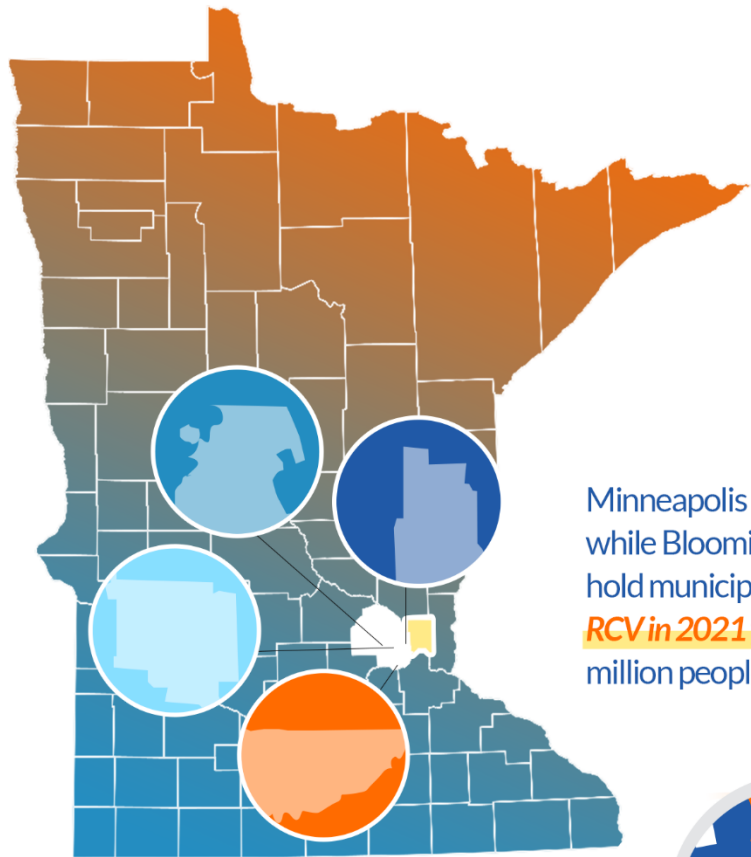
Since 2009

Fairvote Minnesota has been documenting the experience of Minnesota voters using ranked choice ballots; this report contains **highlights of that data**, including **polling, election outcomes, and voter experience.**

By all measures,
RCV has been a resounding success for Minnesota

RCV by the Numbers

Five cities will use RCV in 2021:



- Minneapolis (since 2009)
- St. Paul (since 2011)
- St. Louis Park (since 2019)
- Bloomington (starting 2021)
- Minnetonka (starting 2021)

Minneapolis holds regular municipal elections every four years, while Bloomington, Minnetonka, St. Paul and St. Louis Park hold municipal elections every two years. **All five cities will use RCV in 2021 for mayoral and city council elections.** Close to one million people live in cities in Minnesota using RCV.

Highlights



of voters find RCV simple to use



of voters like RCV and want to continue to use it



of voters want to see RCV expanded to state elections



of voters say RCV creates more civil campaigns



What do voters think about RCV?



[What Minneapolis voters think about RCV](#)

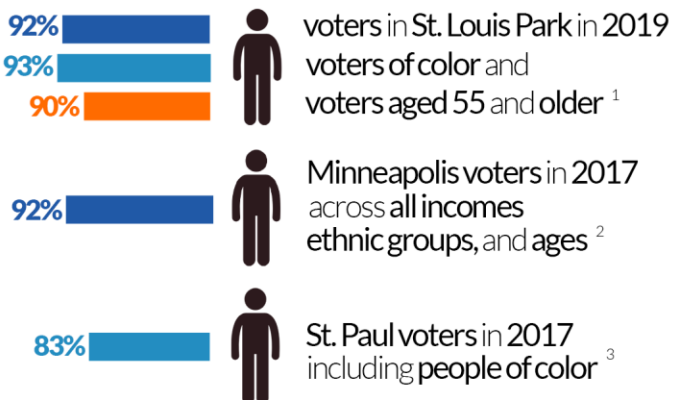


[What St. Paul voters think about RCV](#)

The following data is from the most recent polling in the three Minnesota cities using **Ranked Choice Voting**

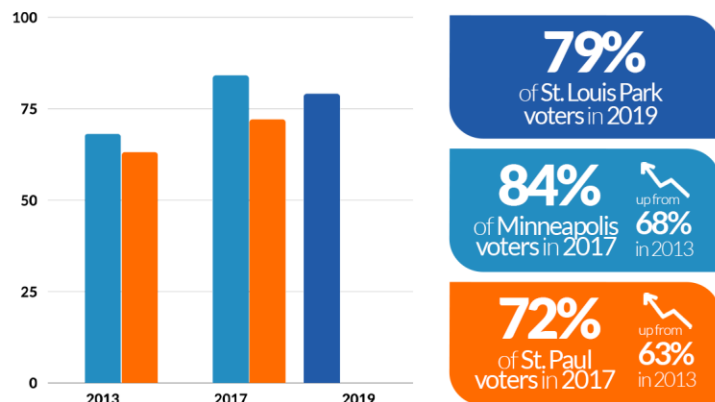
Ease of Use:

Voters consistently and overwhelmingly report that RCV is easy to use.



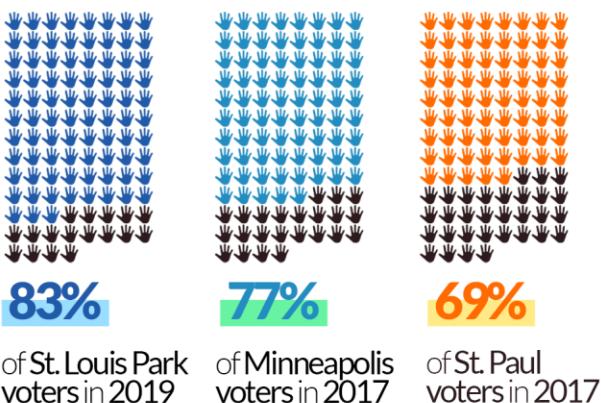
Like RCV:

Voters like RCV, want to continue using it, and the percentage of voters liking RCV increases over time.



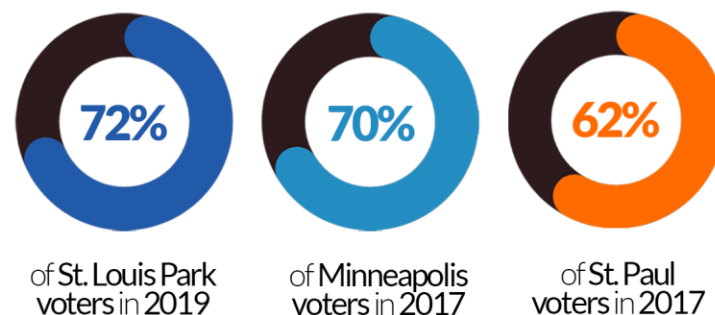
Familiarity with RCV:

Vast majorities of voters are educated about and familiar with RCV before going to the polls.



Expansion of RCV:

Vast majority of voters in cities using RCV would like to see it expanded to state elections.



RCV fosters more **civil** campaigns

The vast majority of voters report that campaigns are more civil under RCV and that candidates spent no or very little time criticizing each other.

Negative campaigning is not only ineffective, it actually harms the candidate's prospects. For example, in the 2017 Minneapolis election, candidates supported by the Minneapolis Works PAC, which distributed mostly negative mailers, lost in six of the eight races the PAC attempted to influence. In the 2017 St. Paul mayoral campaign, a PAC attack mailer against Melvin Carter backfired and may have helped push Melvin above 50% in the first round of voting.



¹ 2019 exit poll of St. Louis Park voters conducted by Edison Research.
² 2017 exit poll of Minneapolis voters conducted by Edison Research.
³ 2017 exit poll of St. Paul voters conducted by Edison Research.

Election Outcomes: A Stronger Democracy

Voter participation is higher

Election data on voter turnout demonstrates that in addition to the benefit of increasing effective voter participation by eliminating the low-turnout nonpartisan primary (in which only 4-10% of voters participate), turnout in November is trending upward under RCV by fostering more competitive elections with multiple candidates -- a key driver of voter turnout.

St. Louis Park in 2019:

- Voter turnout increased by nearly

50%

4,436 to 6,619

over 2015, the last similar election.⁴

Minneapolis in 2017:

- Voter turnout was

43%

*the highest for a municipal election in 20 years and a more than 32% increase over 2013, which was the highest turnout in 12 years.*⁵

- Competitive council races decided by second- and third-choice votes saw the *highest rates of increased voter turnout in 2017* over 2013:

Ward 1  55% increase

Ward 3  57% increase

Ward 4  38% increase

Ward 5  20% increase

Ward 11  25% increase

St. Paul 2013-2017

27%

or 61,984

voters turned out in the 2017 mayoral election, the highest participation in eighteen years.⁶

- Prior to the open mayoral race in 2017, the competitive 2015 Ward 2 city council race turned out

6%

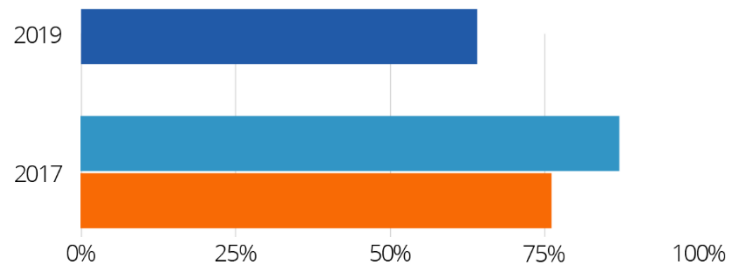
more voters than in 2011, and was the Ward's highest turnout for a municipal election in a decade.

- In the 2013 special election for the Ward 1 city council seat, turnout was

33%

higher than in 2011, and the Ward's highest turnout for a municipal election in 8 years.

Voters rank their ballots



- 64% of first-time St. Louis Park voters ranked their ballots in 2019
- 87% of Minneapolis and 76% of St. Paul voters ranked their ballots in 2017

The large number of voters that rank their ballots demonstrates that very few voters choose to only vote for one candidate. This means that the vast majority of voters feel that they played a role in deciding the winner.

Valid ballot rates demonstrate high voter proficiency



99.96%
valid ballot rate
in Minneapolis



99.99%
valid ballot rate in
St. Paul in 2017

⁴ 2019 Election Results | St. Louis Park, MN

⁵ 2017 Election Results - City of Minneapolis

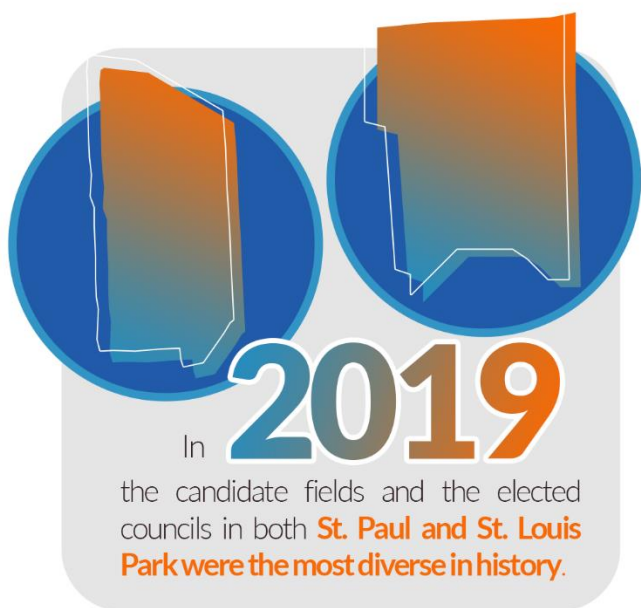
⁶ 2017 Election Results - St. Paul Municipal General Election

RCV elections uphold highest levels of voter integrity and transparency

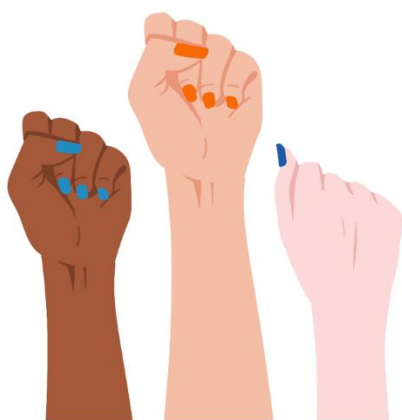
- City ordinances describe with **high degrees of detail, the process of how RCV elections are tabulated, reported, and audited.**
- **Public election results show the number of votes and reallocation of votes in each round of counting.** See each city's election results: [Minneapolis](#), [St. Paul](#), and [St. Louis Park](#).
- **Valid ballot rates are nearly 100% in RCV elections.**
- **There has not been a single complaint** brought against any of the three cities about miscounting or misreporting election results.
- **First-round election results are available on election night.** In Minneapolis and St. Louis Park (and starting in 2021 in Bloomington and Minnetonka), election results for races that require additional rounds of tabulation are available the next day. St. Paul continues to manually tabulate ballots which is typically completed a few days following the election. RCV tabulation software that would make same day election results available is anticipated this year in Minneapolis.



RCV increases the diversity of candidates running and improves electoral outcomes **for women and people of color.**



St. Paul's 2017 election had the most **demographically diverse slate of mayoral candidates in the city's history**, and voters elected **St. Paul's first African American mayor**. In Minneapolis, it helped elect the city's most diverse city council in history, including an **African American councilmember, two transgender people of color** and the re-election of the **first Somali-American and Latina**.



12 In Minneapolis in 2017, **a woman or person of color won in** **of the 22 races.**



In 2013 in Minneapolis, voters elected a **gender-balanced city council** and the **second female mayor in Minneapolis history**.

They also elected the **first Somali-American, Latina, and Hmong city council candidates in Minneapolis history**, resulting in the **city's most diverse city council up to that point**.