City of Santa Clara

City Council Meeting

Item 22.B Charter Review Committee Recommendations

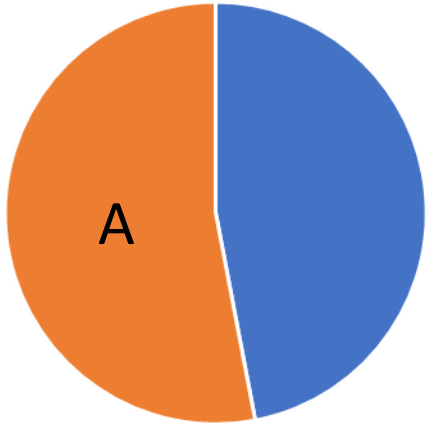
July 18, 2017

City of Santa Clara
The Center of What's Possible

How Much Do You Need to Guarantee a Win?

Example: 100 Voters

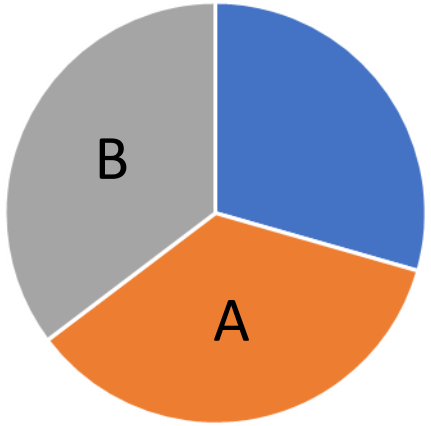
1 Seat Open



50% + 1 vote = 51

A gets 51 votes
Next Candidate at most gets 49

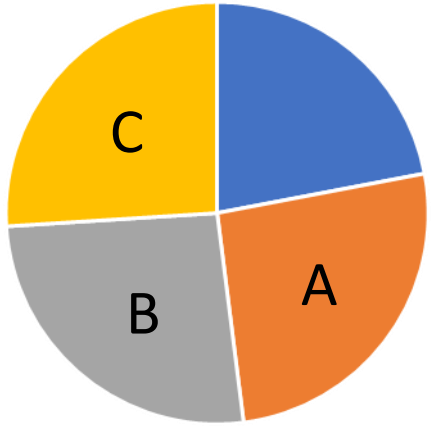
2 Seats Open



33% + 1 vote = 34

A, B each get 34 votes
Next Candidate at most gets 32

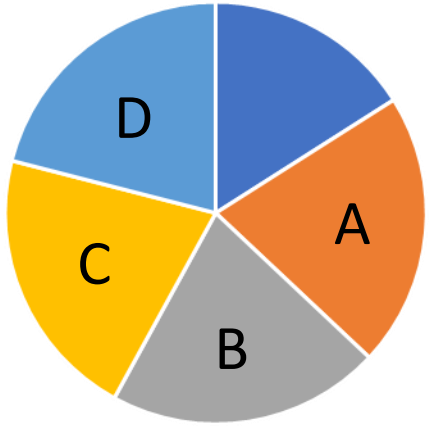
3 Seats Open



25% + 1 vote = 26

A, B, C each get 26 votes
Next Candidate at most gets 22

4 Seats Open



20% + 1 vote = 21

A, B, C, D each get 21 votes
Next Candidate at most gets 16

Having more seats open at a single time lowers the threshold to guarantee a win, thereby making it easier for minority voices to have a chance at winning a seat at the table.

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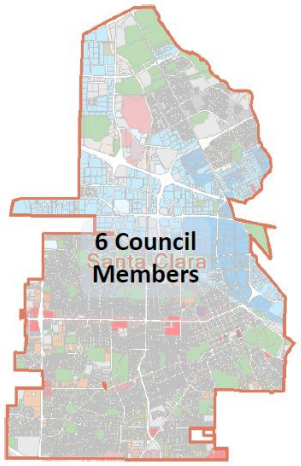
Different Districting Options

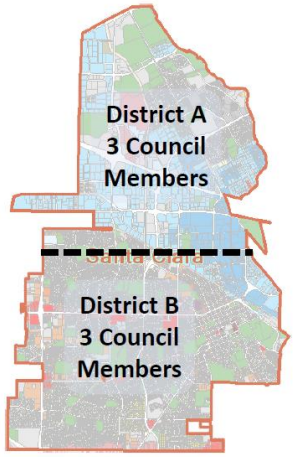
District lines **ONLY** for illustration purposes.

No Districts



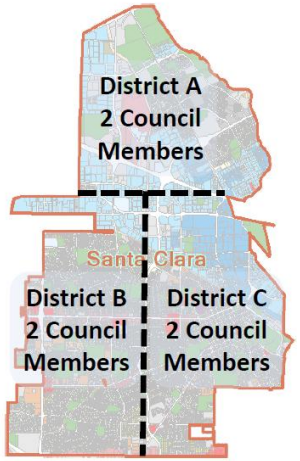
Threshold to win (if 3 seats per election cycle) = 25%+1

2 Districts



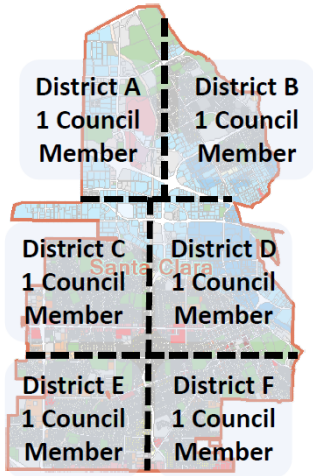
Threshold to win (if 3 seats per election cycle) = 25%+1

3 Districts



Threshold to win (if 2 seats per election cycle) = 33%+1
Threshold to win (if 1 seat per election cycle) = 50%+1

6 Seats Open



Threshold to win = 50%+1

"2 Districts" scenario offers the lowest winning threshold, in addition to other benefits (safe harbor, eliminating mini-Mayor effect, and polarizing geographical-based issues).

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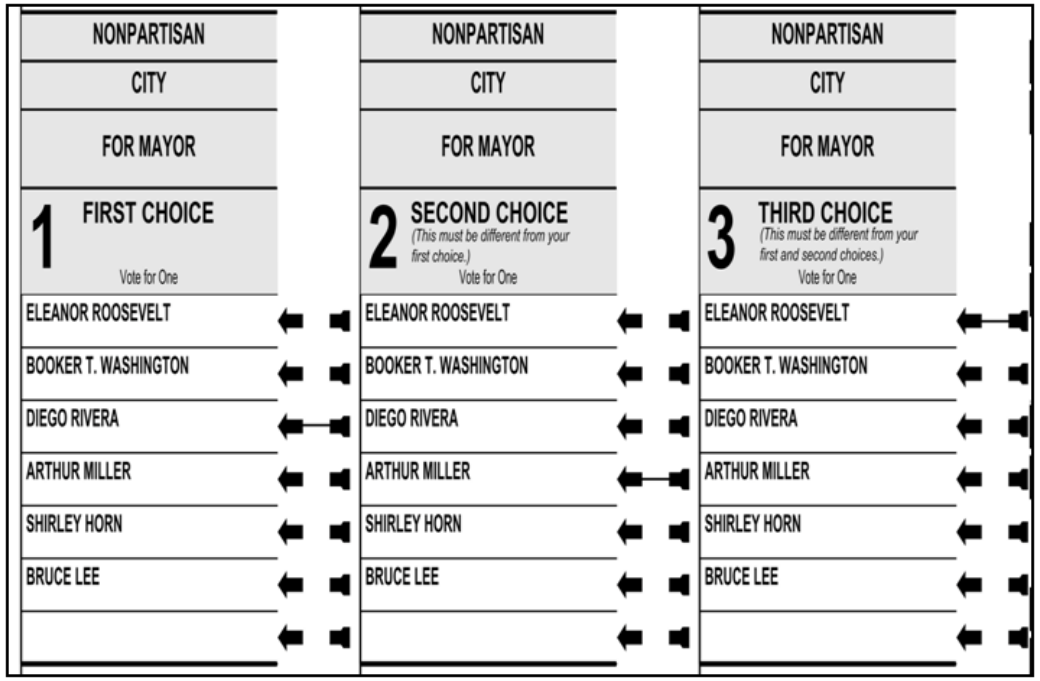
How Does Ranked Choice Voting Work?

Sample Ballot



NONPARTISAN	NONPARTISAN	NONPARTISAN
CITY	CITY	CITY
FOR MAYOR	FOR MAYOR	FOR MAYOR
1 FIRST CHOICE Vote for One	2 SECOND CHOICE (This must be different from your first choice.) Vote for One	3 THIRD CHOICE (This must be different from your first and second choices.) Vote for One
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT	ELEANOR ROOSEVELT	ELEANOR ROOSEVELT
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON	BOOKER T. WASHINGTON	BOOKER T. WASHINGTON
DIEGO RIVERA	DIEGO RIVERA	DIEGO RIVERA
ARTHUR MILLER	ARTHUR MILLER	ARTHUR MILLER
SHIRLEY HORN	SHIRLEY HORN	SHIRLEY HORN
BRUCE LEE	BRUCE LEE	BRUCE LEE

[redacted] | CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS | NOVEMBER 5, 2013

OFFICIAL BALLOT
CITY GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT _____ Judge _____ Judge

RANKED CHOICE VOTING INSTRUCTIONS TO THE VOTERS
Rank up to 3 different candidates for each office.
Vote from left to right in each office in order of your preference.
Completely fill in the oval next to your choice, like this: ● CANDIDATE NAME

CITY OFFICES

MAYOR — Rank your first, second and third choice candidates in the columns below. One to be elected.

1 1st Choice Select One	2 2nd Choice, if any Must be DIFFERENT from your 1st choice. Select One	3 3rd Choice, if any Must be DIFFERENT from your 1st and 2nd choices. Select One
STEPHANIE WOODRUFF Democratic-Farmer-Labor	STEPHANIE WOODRUFF Democratic-Farmer-Labor	STEPHANIE WOODRUFF Democratic-Farmer-Labor
JOHN LESLIE HARTWIG Independent	JOHN LESLIE HARTWIG Independent	JOHN LESLIE HARTWIG Independent
DAN COHEN Jobs Downtown Casino	DAN COHEN Jobs Downtown Casino	DAN COHEN Jobs Downtown Casino
BOB "AGAIN" CARNEY JR Demand Transit Revolution	BOB "AGAIN" CARNEY JR Demand Transit Revolution	BOB "AGAIN" CARNEY JR Demand Transit Revolution
JAMES EVERETT Green Party	JAMES EVERETT Green Party	JAMES EVERETT Green Party
DON SAMUELS Democratic-Farmer-Labor	DON SAMUELS Democratic-Farmer-Labor	DON SAMUELS Democratic-Farmer-Labor
BETSY HODGES Democratic-Farmer-Labor	BETSY HODGES Democratic-Farmer-Labor	BETSY HODGES Democratic-Farmer-Labor
RAHN V. WORKCUFF Independence Party	RAHN V. WORKCUFF Independence Party	RAHN V. WORKCUFF Independence Party
BOB FINE Democratic-Farmer-Labor	BOB FINE Democratic-Farmer-Labor	BOB FINE Democratic-Farmer-Labor
MARK V ANDERSON	MARK V ANDERSON	MARK V ANDERSON

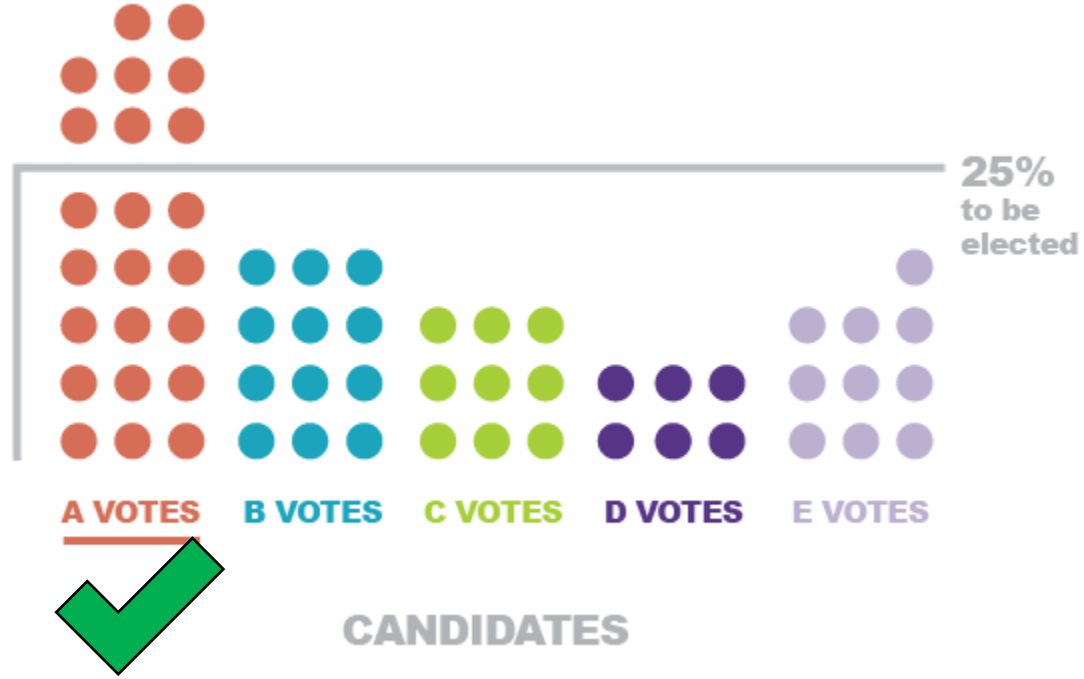
City of Santa Clara
The Center of What's Possible

How Does Ranked Choice Voting Work?

3 Seats Open (Threshold to win is 25%+1)

STEP 1:

Candidate A wins in the first round of counting because he/she received more than 25% of the votes cast. Since ranked choice voting is designed to waste as few votes as possible, the surplus votes for Candidate "A" beyond the 25% needed to win will count for those voters' next choice.



Redistributing votes in excess of the threshold minimizes “gaming the system”. Voters vote for their favorite candidate without worrying whether their vote will be “wasted” or not.

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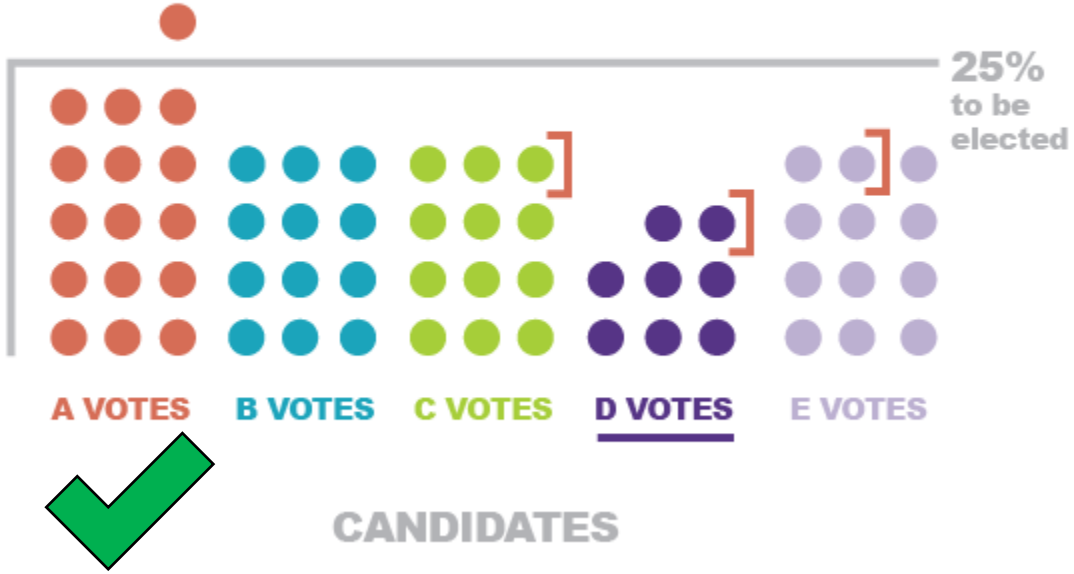
Image and example credit: FairVoteCA.org

How Does Ranked Choice Voting Work?

3 Seats Open (Threshold to win is 25%+1)

STEP 2:

Since Candidate "A" received 7 votes beyond the winning threshold, those 7 will count for those voters' second choice, adding three votes to Candidate "C," two votes to Candidate "D," and two votes to Candidate "E."



Negative campaigning by candidates is reduced because candidates are less likely to want to be adversarial if they are hoping to be a voter's 2nd or 3rd pick (if not their 1st).

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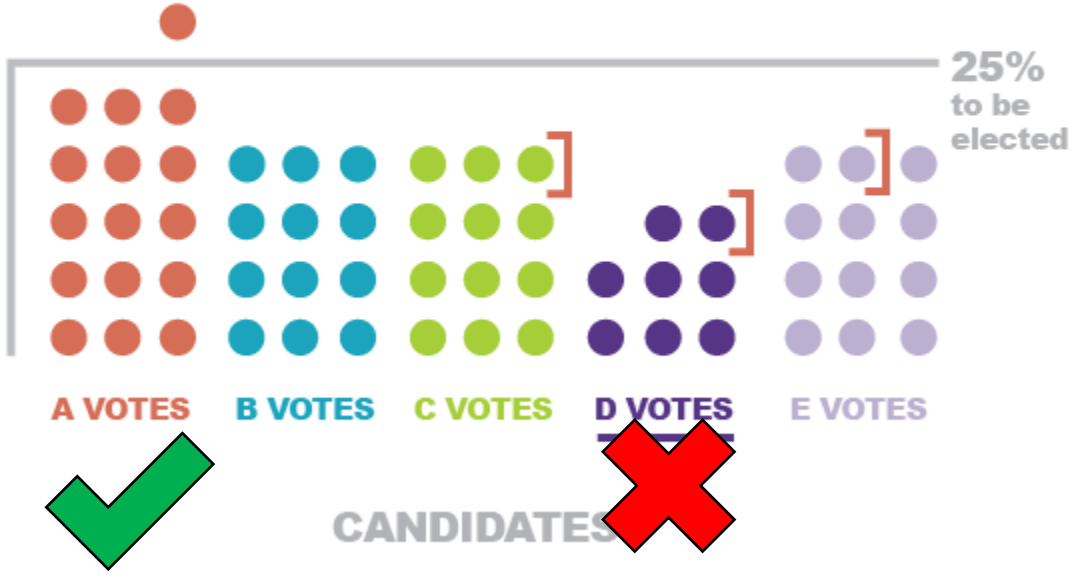
How Does Ranked Choice Voting Work?

3 Seats Open (Threshold to win is 25%+1)

STEP 3:

Candidate "D" has the lowest number of votes and is eliminated. The eight votes Candidate "D" received will now count for voters' next choice.



Having more seats open at a single time lowers the threshold to guarantee a win, thereby making it easier for minority voices to have a chance at winning a seat at the table.

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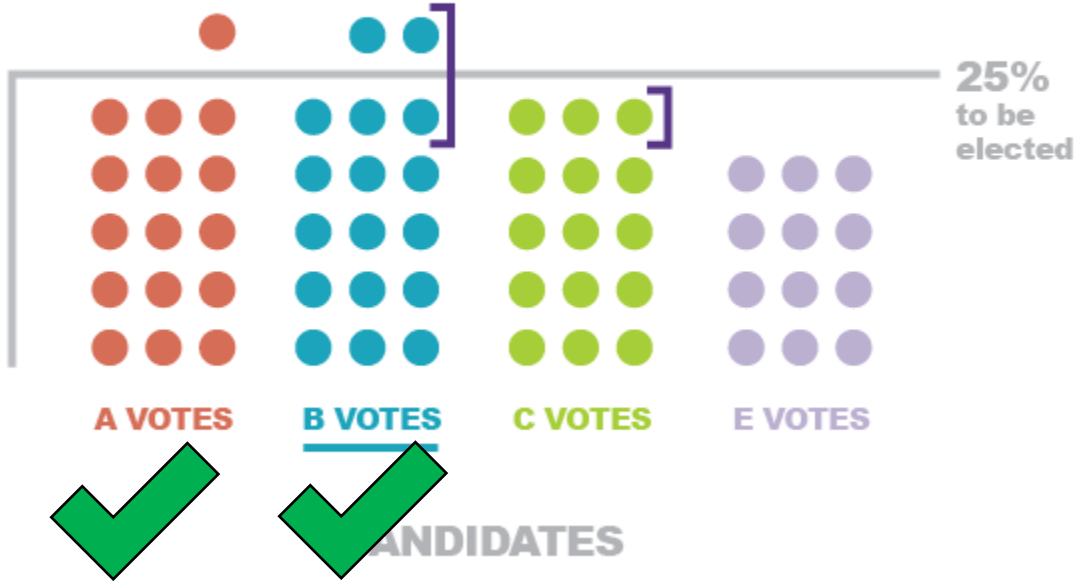
The Center of What's Possible

How Does Ranked Choice Voting Work?

3 Seats Open (Threshold to win is 25%+1)

STEP 4:

Candidate D's votes are redistributed to the next choice, pushing Candidate "B" over the threshold to be elected. One vote for Candidate "B" is beyond what is necessary to win, and is therefore counted for the voter's next choice. Candidate "B" is declared a winner along with Candidate "A," and we have one seat left to elect among the remaining candidates.



Candidates never receive more votes than they need to win (determined by threshold), thereby empowering the votership's voice in getting the most representative council.

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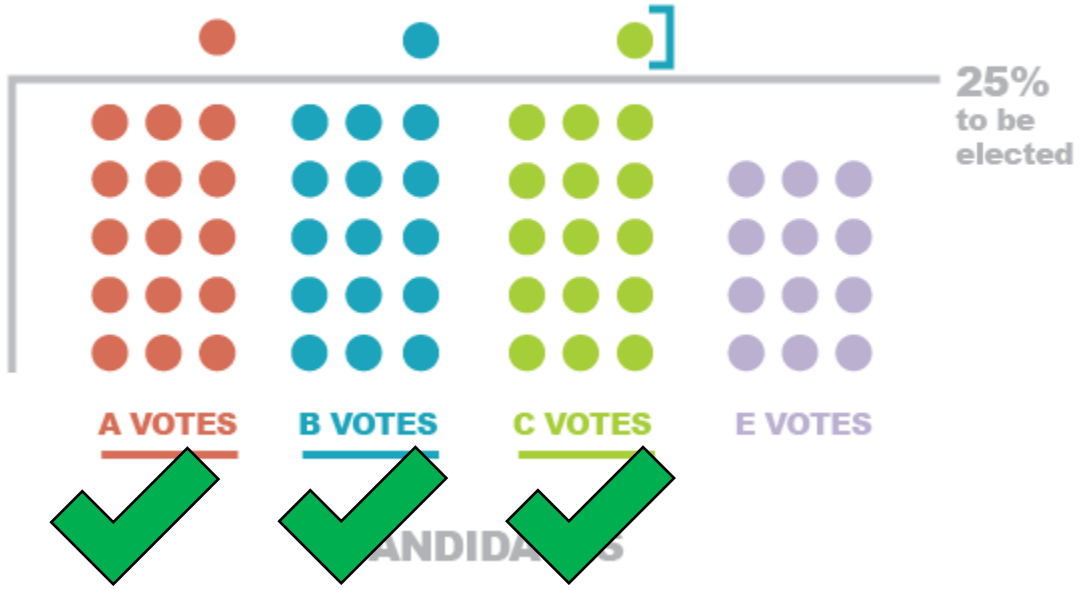
How Does Ranked Choice Voting Work?

3 Seats Open (Threshold to win is 25%+1)

STEP 5:

The one surplus vote from Candidate "B" counts for the voter's next choice, putting Candidate "C" over the threshold to be elected (25% +1), making Candidate "C "the 3rd and final winner.



If the final vote from B were to be given to E instead, C would still win as they are the more consensus candidate (versus E). Result is a more consensus-driven, representative council.

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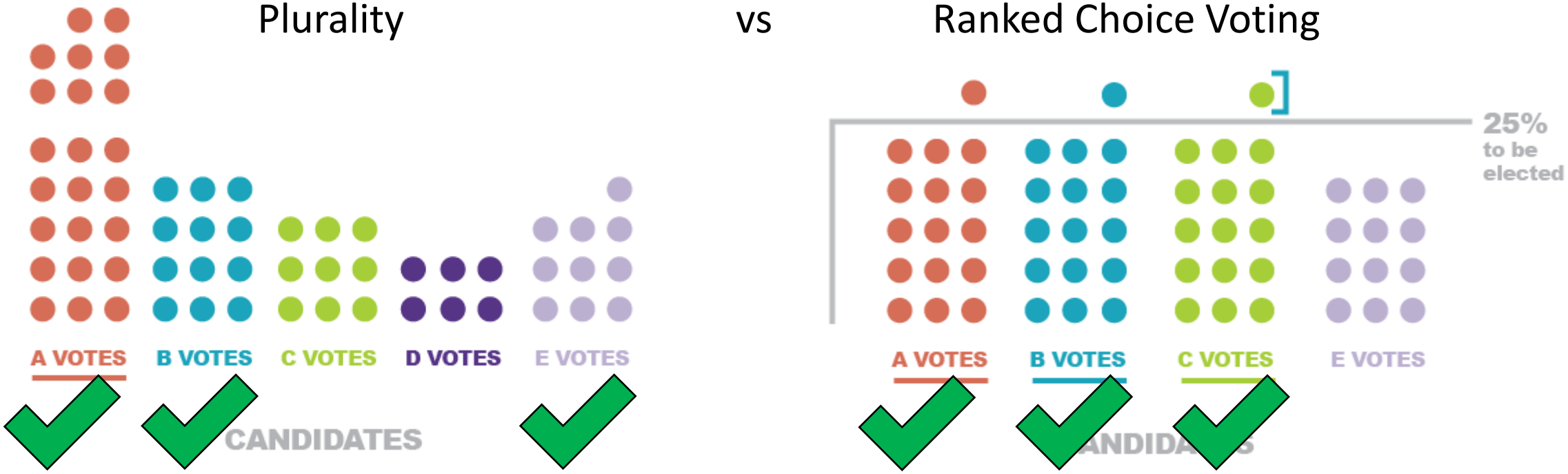
How Does Ranked Choice Voting Work?

Comparison (same initial vote)

Plurality vs Ranked Choice Voting



Using Ranked Choice Voting Candidate C is elected rather than Candidate E, since Candidate C is a more consensus candidate.

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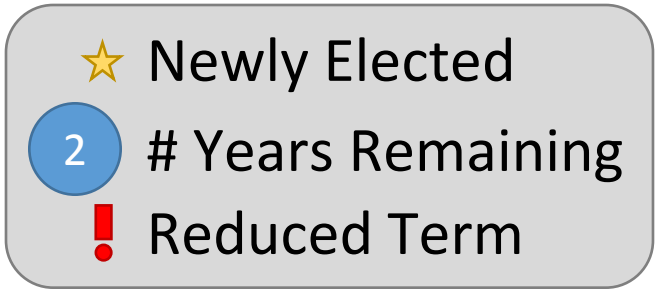
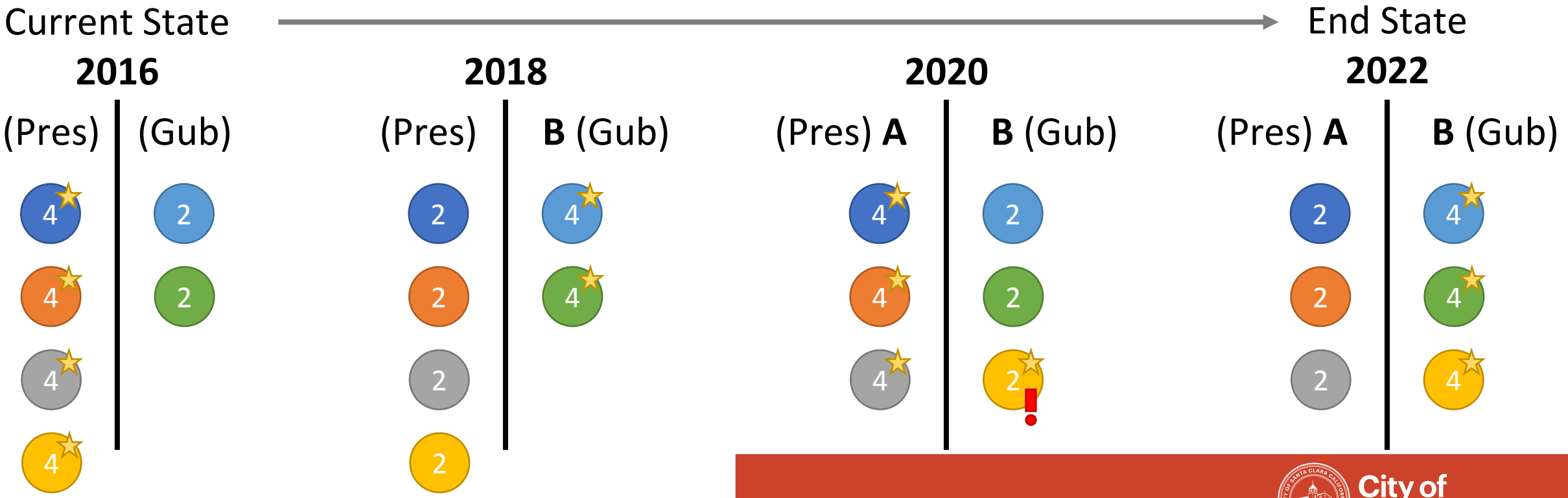
Transition Plan



A good transition plan would:

- ✓ Maintain balanced turnover
- ✓ Minimize the number of “reduced term” candidates
- ✓ Mitigate the “popularity contest” effect (where winning threshold is 50%+1)
- ✓ Complete the transition as quickly as possible



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CITY OF SANTA CLARA CALIFORNIA
1852
THE MISSION CITY