

RANKED CHOICE VOTING

IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

November 5, 2024 General Election

City of Portland,

Mayor

Rank as many candidates as you wish, up to 6

Rank	1	2	3	4
Candidate 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Candidate 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Candidate 6	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 7	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 8	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write-in	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

VOTING
AREA

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Introduction

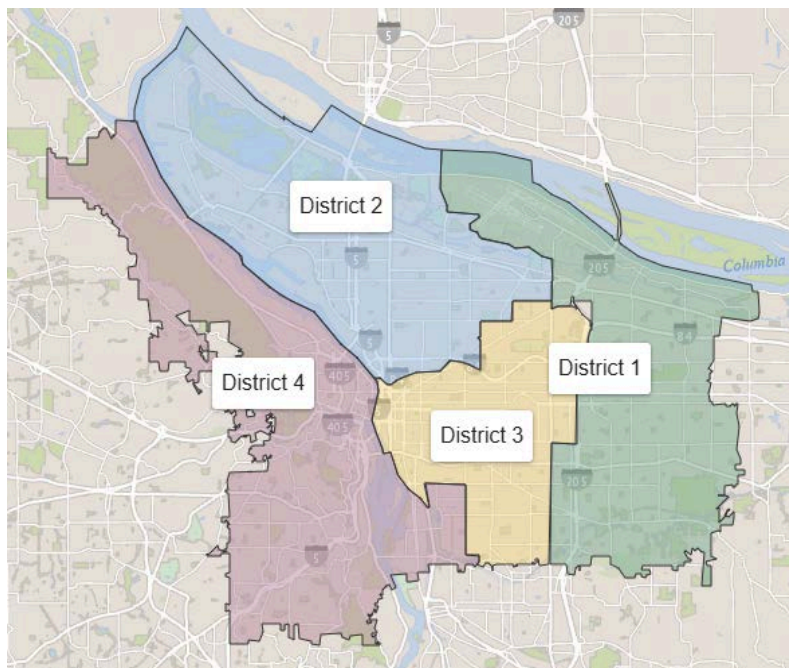
The purpose of this report is to provide an accurate summary of the preparation, outcomes, and evaluation of the implementation of ranked choice voting election administration for the November 5, 2024 General Election by the Multnomah County Elections Division.

In addition to providing a clear public record for the residents of Multnomah County, we hope that this report will be useful to other jurisdictions who administer ranked choice voting elections. The advice and guidance provided to the Multnomah County Elections Division by other jurisdictions voting was essential and invaluable and we hope that our experience can benefit other election administrators who are preparing to implement ranked choice voting elections.

Background

In November 2022, voters approved Measure 26-228 and Measure 26-232 to require the use of ranked choice voting (RCV) for all City of Portland and Multnomah County candidate contests.

- Portland city charter required the use of RCV to commence in 2024 for the following contests: (1) Single-winner RCV (instant runoff voting) for electing the Mayor and the Auditor, and (2) Multi-winner RCV (single transferable vote) for electing three City Council members in each of four newly-created geographic districts.



- Multnomah County home rule charter requires the use of single-winner RCV contests for all County elective offices no later than the 2026 general election.

Multnomah County Elections Divisions administers and conducts all Federal, State, County, City and Special District elections in Multnomah County, including elections for the City of Portland. In early 2023 the Elections Division began a rigorous preparation and testing process to administer RCV elections for the City of Portland in November 2024, while laying the groundwork for a successful countywide implementation in 2026. In addition to preparing new systems, tools, and procedures for election administration, the Elections Division worked closely with the City of Portland to collaboratively plan and execute RCV voter education strategies.

The Elections Division successfully administered all six City of Portland candidate contests using RCV in the November 5, 2024 General Election. Complete round-by-round results were posted at 8pm on Election Night and updated regularly thereafter until results were certified on December 2, 2024.

Overview of RCV

Ranked choice voting is an election method in which voters rank candidates for an office in order of their preference. Two variations of RCV are used in City of Portland contests:

Single-Winner Ranked Choice Voting

This form of voting is also referred to as instant runoff voting (IRV). Single-winner RCV was used to elect Portland Mayor and Portland Auditor. Per City of Portland Code, single-winner ranked choice voting operates as following:

- Voters may rank up to 6 candidates in order of preference.
- If no candidate receives a majority of the vote (i.e. 50%+1) after counting Rank 1 votes for each candidate in the first round, the candidate with the fewest number of votes is eliminated and votes for that candidate are transferred to their voters' next-highest ranked active candidates.
 - If a ballot does not indicate any additional candidate rankings, the ballot is declared inactive and set aside.
- If a candidate in the second round receives a majority of the votes tallied in that round, they are declared elected. If no candidate receives a majority, the process of eliminating a candidate and transferring votes in rounds continues.

Multi-Winner Ranked Choice Voting

This form of voting is also referred to as single transferable vote (STV) or proportional ranked choice voting (PRCV). Multi-winner RCV was used for City of Portland City Council elections, which elect 3 candidates per district for four newly-created districts. Per City of Portland Code, multi-winner ranked choice voting operates as follows:

- Voters rank up to 6 candidates in order of preference.
- The City charter specifies the threshold for election as the percentage of votes a candidate must receive to be elected such that no more candidates could reach the threshold than the number of offices to be elected. In a Portland City Council race with three Council members being elected, the threshold is 25%+1 vote.
- After the initial round of counting the Rank 1 votes for each candidate, if one or more candidates reach the threshold, they are declared elected. Tabulation continues in rounds until all seats to be filled are elected.
 - If a candidate is elected in a round, any votes they received above the threshold (known as surplus votes) are transferred to their voters' next-ranked remaining candidates. Surplus votes are transferred on a fractional basis to ensure all voters who voted for the elected candidate contribute to the identification of next-ranked candidates.

- For example, if the threshold were established at 9,000 votes and a candidate received 10,000 votes, their “surplus” is 1,000 votes. The 1,000 votes are 10% (0.1) of the total votes for the elected candidate, so 0.1 vote is transferred from each of the 10,000 ballots to the next-ranked candidate identified on each respective ballot.
- In each subsequent round of tabulation, the candidate with the fewest number of votes is eliminated and votes for that candidate are transferred to their voters’ next highest-ranked active candidates.
- If a ballot does not have any remaining valid rankings when a vote is being transferred, the ballot is declared inactive and set aside.

Section 1: Preparation

Identification of Ranked Choice Voting Advisors

The Elections Division entered into a memorandum of understanding to receive advice from the Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center (RCVRC) – a national, non-partisan non-profit dedicated to providing information on RCV – on updates to County processes for ballot processing, tabulation, reporting, recounts, and audits, as well as RCV resources and model practices as the County prepared for the November 2024 election. RCVRC provided these consulting services to the County free of charge.

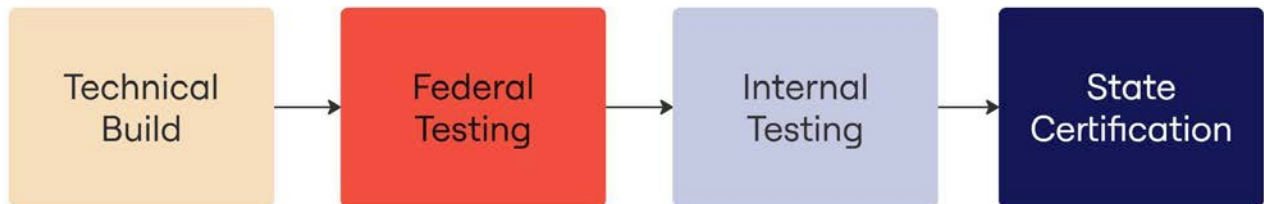
The ongoing guidance and expertise of the staff of RCVRC was crucial to the successful implementation of RCV at Multnomah County Elections Division.

City of Portland Code Update

In January 2023, Multnomah County Elections Division began working closely with the City of Portland and the Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center to support the development of [City Code 2.08.030](#), outlining how ranked choice voting elections are to be conducted for City of Portland candidate contests. The code was finalized in late March 2024 and adopted by Portland City Council on April 19, 2023.

Voting System Software

To allow the Elections Division to design, count, and tabulate ranked choice ballots, Clear Ballot Group – Multnomah County’s longtime voting system software vendor – developed an updated version of its software that is capable of counting single and multi-winner ranked choice contests in accordance with City of Portland Code 2.08.030. The Clear Ballot software, CB 2.5OR, was designed to be paired with the open source software RCTab to produce round-by-round results for RCV contests.



Federal Testing

In October 2023, Clear Ballot Group submitted its application for the federal certification of CB 2.5OR, including RCTab, and initiated the review process with a federally accredited Voting System Test Laboratory. In June 2024, after extensive testing, the test laboratory approved Clear Ballot Group's application.

Internal Testing

In January 2024, Clear Ballot Group provided the Elections Division with a sandboxed demonstration version of CB 2.5OR for staff training and planning purposes.

After federal approval was received in June 2024, the Elections Division began performing its own formal internal tests of the approved software.

(1) Test Election Building

Using CB 2.5OR, the Elections Division built several test elections for both single and multi-winner RCV contests using sample candidate lists. This allowed us to test system capabilities and refine procedures for ballot design, scanning, adjudication, write-in assignment, and tabulation.

(2) Hand Recount Verification

On July 29-August 2, 2024, the Multnomah County Elections Division executed a successful hand recount of a multi-winner ranked choice voting contest and was able to validate the tabulation output that was created from the election built and administered in CB 2.5OR.

Additional details on the hand recount procedure and mock recount event can be found in the 'Hand Recount & Audit Procedures' on page 10.

(3) Load Test

On Monday, August 19, 2024 Multnomah County Elections Division performed a load test to measure the ability of CB 2.5OR to manage multiple processes simultaneously. The goal of this test was to explore the software's potential limitations, while tracking the occurrence of slowdowns and/or stoppages so that we can proactively plan and prepare. Staff members from Clear Ballot Group, the Oregon Secretary of State, and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission were present to observe.

County Elections workers scanned 161,597 ranked choice ballots into an election and then performed a three phase load test.

- In Phase 1, the write-in module could not be loaded or used while actively scanning ballots into the RCV election. However, the write-in module was accessible and operational for adjudicating RCV write-in without pause or issue while scanning ballots for the General Election in Phases 2 and 3.
- In all three phases, scanning of each 400 ballot batch took approximately 5 minutes with no logged slowdowns.
- In all three phases, adjudication, vote visualization, and results reporting processes also continued as normal with no slowdowns or issues.

State Certification

Based on the findings from the federal testing, combined with the load test and mock hand recount that were performed at Multnomah County Elections Division, the software was approved for Oregon state certification. A letter of approval of CB 2.5OR from the Oregon Secretary of State was transmitted to Clear Ballot Group on August 29, 2024.

Intergovernmental Agreement

The City of Portland spans three counties, with 0.3% of voters residing in Clackamas County and Washington County and the remaining 99% residing in Multnomah County. On [October 5th, 2023](#) the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners approved an IGA with Clackamas County and Washington County for coordinated administration of City of Portland RCV candidate contests, with Multnomah County acting as the central tabulator for all three counties.

After executing the IGA, Multnomah County Elections staff worked with the elections staff from Washington and Clackamas County to develop procedures for the coordinated administration and met regularly through the election to ensure processes were carried out seamlessly. For City of Portland candidate contests, Multnomah County provided RCV ballot designs to Washington County and Clackamas County, conducted central tabulation of all RCV ballot data, and produced and posted consolidated results for the City of Portland RCV contests.

Hand Count & Audit Procedures

Procedures

Oregon state statute dictates that all recounts of elections must be done by hand¹ and so the Elections Division needed to be prepared to count both single and multi-winner RCV elections by hand. While hand recount procedures for single-winner RCV contests exist and have been used in other jurisdictions in the United States, there was not an existing procedure for a multi-winner ranked choice contest with proportional transfer of surplus votes.

The Elections Division worked closely with staff from the Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center (RCVRC) to draft hand recount procedures in accordance with City of Portland code 2.08.030 for both single and multi-winner RCV contests. These hand recount procedures additionally serve as the basis for post-election audit procedures.

Testing

In January 2024, staff from the RCVRC coordinated a small-scale mock hand count of ballots in a multi-winner RCV contest to help assess and refine the draft recount procedures. This initial testing of the procedure was successful.

In July 2024, using results data from a CB 2.5OR test election, Multnomah County Elections Division conducted a larger mock hand recount of a contest for three City Councilors in the City of Portland's District 2.

The purpose of conducting this large-scale mock event was twofold: (1) To fully test the hand recount procedure to ensure it was ready in the event of a recount, (2) To validate the results of tabulation from the election that was built and counted using CB 2.5OR and tabulated using RCTab.

Over 50 participants – including representatives from Multnomah County, Washington County, Clackamas County, the City of Portland, King County, Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center, Center for Civic Design, Lewis and Clark College and the Oregon Secretary of State's office – gathered to help test the procedure.

- After three days, the recount team was able to successfully recount a 5000-ballot election. The results of the recount matched those of the initial tabulation from the election created in CB 2.5OR.
- The final two days of the week were used to conduct an additional hand recount with a 1000-ballot election. The ballots in this sample election were marked such that they

¹ ORS 258, https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/ors/ors258.html

had several unique adjudications needs, allowing us to further test the procedure for the more challenging ballot conditions that might be encountered in a real election. The results of the recount matched those of the initial tabulation from the election created in 2.5OR Clear Count.

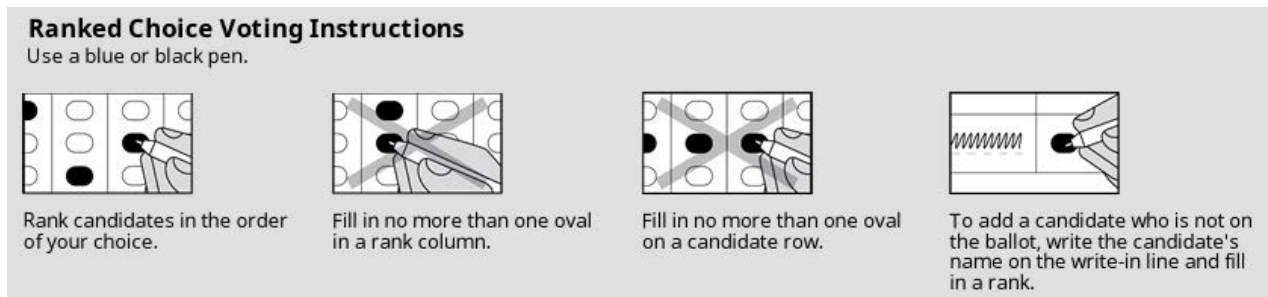
After testing the procedure twice in two different configurations, the hand recount procedure was successful and was able to validate the tabulation output that was created from the election built and administered in CB 2.5OR. While we gained valuable feedback that will allow us to refine and finalize the procedure, no major issues were encountered.

[Read more and view a video about the mock hand count event here.](#)

Ballot Design

Ranked choice voting ballots feature a grid-style layout for each contest, with a full candidate list and rank columns for each candidate and write-in line². Due to grid-style layout and the large number of candidates for each contest, the Elections Division needed to design a separate, additional ballot page for all Portland voters that contained only City of Portland RCV candidate contests.

The Elections Division used the updated CB 2.5OR software to design the RCV ballots in line with best practices shared by other jurisdictions who administered RCV elections. New ballot instructions were developed with guidance from the Center for Civic Design, a national nonprofit organization that provides instructional and design best practices with elections offices.



Ballot Adjudication Guidance

Adjudication is the process of resolving the voter’s intent on ballots for which the software could not accurately make a determination. Two people of more than one political party decide voter intent on anomalous ballots by examining the ballots against provided guidance.

Drawing from the experience and expertise of the Elections Division in addition to RCV-specific knowledge from RCVRC, Elections staff developed comprehensive voter intent documentation³ to guide the ballot adjudication process in November 2024, building upon the automatic voter intent defined by Portland City Code 2.08.030.

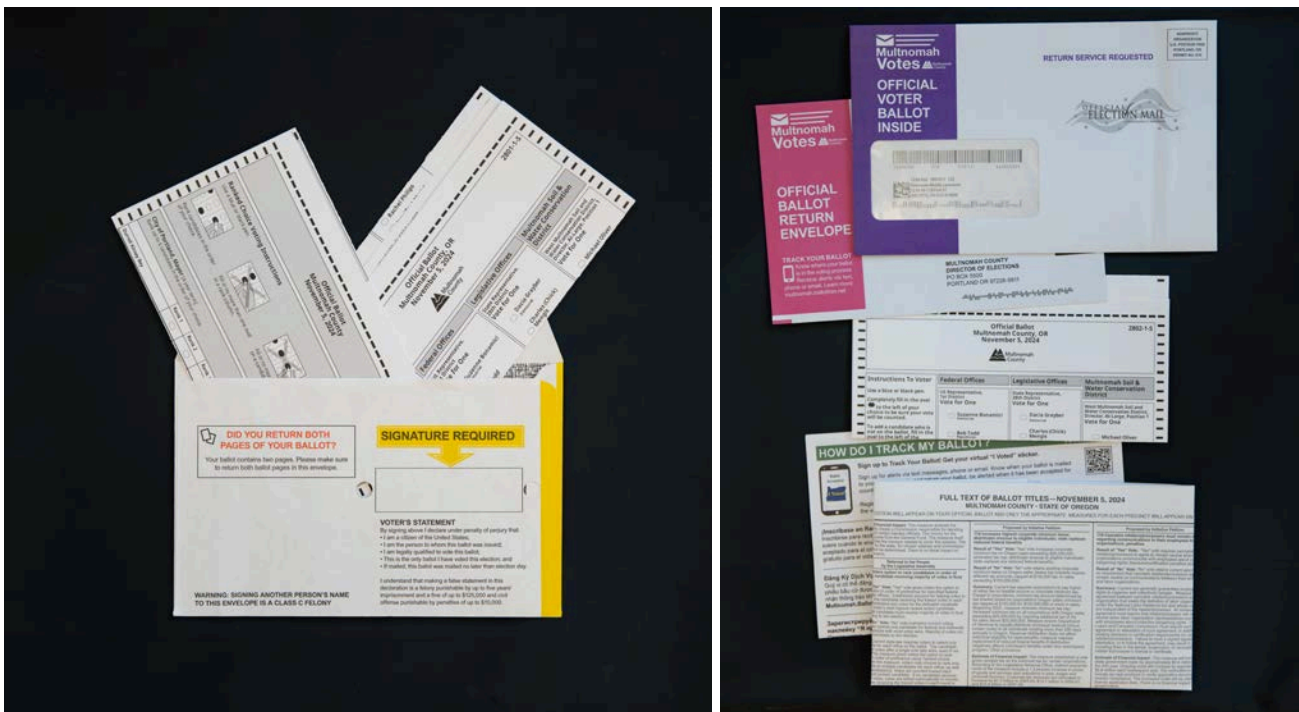
² Sample ballots from the November 2024 General Election can be viewed in the Election Division’s [Ballot Data Report](#)

³ The full adjudication guidance that was used by County Elections workers is included in the Election Division’s [Ballot Data Report](#)

Ballot Processing

With the introduction of an additional RCV ballot page and different software for counting RCV ballots, new and parallel processes were developed so that RCV ballots and general ballots could be concurrently processed in a timely fashion.

The Elections Division developed two different color schemes for the return envelopes in voter's ballot packages for the November 2024 election. City of Portland voters receiving an RCV ballot were sent a canary yellow return envelope and all other Multnomah County voters were sent a pink return envelope. This color coding of return envelopes allowed election workers to more easily sort RCV from non-RCV ballots.



Path of the Ballot - Flow through the process

- *Envelope Sorting* - Ballot envelopes were sorted by color and sent for opening in groupings of Portland RCV return envelopes (canary yellow) and non-RCV return envelopes (pink).
- *Envelope Opening* - Envelopes were opened and ballots were removed, with general election ballot pages placed in separate batched groupings from RCV ballot pages.
- *Ballot Opening* - Ballots were unfolded, accounted for in batches of RCV and general ballot pages, sent for scanning.

- *Ballot Scanning* - RCV ballot pages and general election pages were scanned on separate scanners, in parallel processes. A workflow and staffing plan was created to ensure that scanning both types of ballot pages could occur concurrently.
- *Ballot Adjudication* - Ballots requiring adjudication were processed by multiple adjudication teams – some dedicated to adjudication of RCV ballot pages and others dedicated to adjudication of the general ballot pages. A workflow and staffing plan was created for how both disparate adjudication procedures could occur.
- *Results Reporting* - The results reporting procedures for the general and RCV ballots were completely separate, since RCV results were not uploaded to the Secretary of State’s Election Night Report site and reports were not automatically produced by the software. A workflow was created and additional staff were added to ensure that these disparate procedures could occur simultaneously while maintaining our posted election results schedule.

Results Reporting

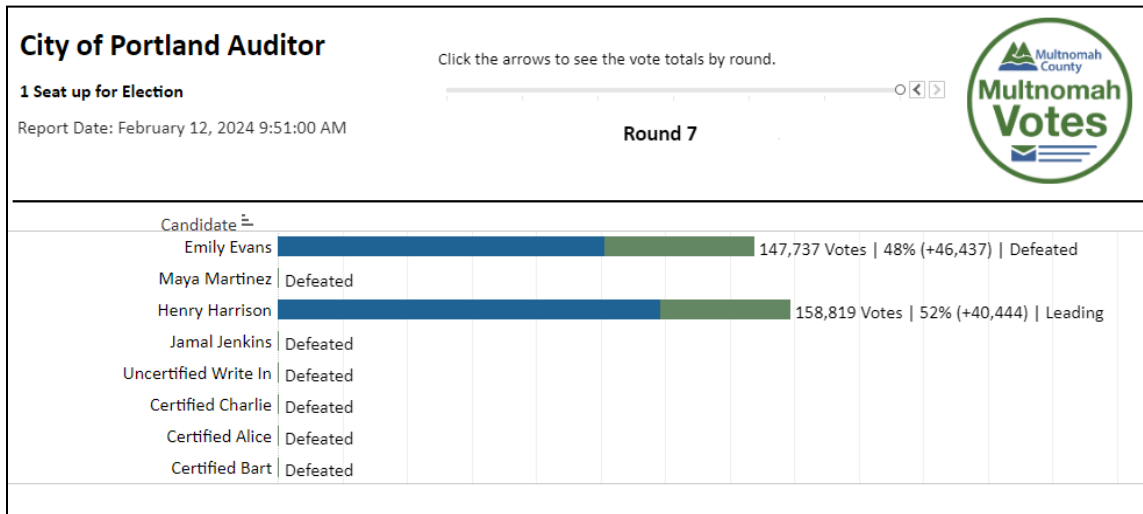
Results Report Formats

Ranked choice voting results are tabulated and presented differently than plurality election results and so new results reporting formats were required. The Elections Division worked closely with IT and data experts from the Multnomah County Department of County Assets and Department of Community Services to develop new formats of results reports for displaying round-by-round RCV tabulation.

In conversations with voters, candidates, and media representatives, the Elections Division found that people were interested in varying levels of detail about tabulation. To address people’s different needs, the Elections Division developed three results reporting formats.

1. *Clickable Bar Chart Visual*

This visual was developed in Tableau, using the code from the City of Minneapolis that they used for displaying results from both single and multi-winner ranked choice voting contests.



2. Detailed Tabular Report

This format was adapted from a report used by New York City for their single-winner RCV contests. The format was adjusted by County staff to also accommodate multi-winner results reporting. This report served as the official reports for the final certified results.

CONSOLIDATED MULTNOMAH COUNTY, WASHINGTON COUNTY, AND CLACKAMAS COUNTY ELECTION RESULTS
 City of Portland Auditor
 UNOFFICIAL PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Contest: City of Portland Auditor
 Election Date: November 05, 2024
 Report Date: March 15, 2024 04:20:18 PM

Unofficial Preliminary Election Results
 Henry Harrison leads in the contest. The election threshold and unofficial preliminary results are subject to change as additional ballots are tallied.
 For more information about ranked choice voting results, please visit www.multco.us/rcv.


How the votes were counted, round-by-round.

	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7
Leads in Contest		Certified Bart	Certified Alice	Certified Charlie	Uncertified Write In	Jamal Jenkins	Maya Martinez
Defeated							Henry Harrison
Election threshold in this round	173,255 votes	173,255 votes	172,163 votes	168,870 votes	168,259 votes	157,929 votes	153,279 votes
	# votes round	% of votes in round	# votes round	% of votes in round	# votes round	% of votes in round	# votes round
Emily Evans	83,041 23.97%	83,041 23.97%	+1,092 84,133 24.43%	+1,092 85,225 25.23%	+3,276 88,501 26.30%	+12,799 101,300 32.07%	+46,437 147,737 48.19%
Maya Martinez	77,903 22.48%	77,903 22.48%	77,903 22.62%	77,903 23.07%	+2,185 80,088 23.80%	+16,094 96,182 30.45%	-96,182 153,279 51.81%
Henry Harrison	76,876 22.19%	76,876 22.19%	+3,275 80,151 23.28%	+1,092 81,243 24.06%	+12,014 93,257 27.71%	+25,118 118,375 37.48%	+40,444 158,819 51.81%
Jamal Jenkins	72,483 20.92%	72,483 20.92%	+1 72,484 21.05%	+1,092 73,576 21.78%	+1,095 74,671 22.19%	-7,671	
Uncertified Write In	19,791 5.71%	19,791 5.71%	19,791 5.75%	19,791 5.86%	-19,791		
Certified Charlie	9,863 2.85%	9,863 2.85%	9,863 2.86%	-9,863			
Certified Alice	5,459 1.58%	+1,092 6,551 1.89%	-6,551				
Certified Bart	1,092 0.32%	-1,092					

* Tie resolved by lot in accordance with election law and reused in event of a recount.
 Election Threshold is the number of votes sufficient for a candidate to be elected.
 Votes Transferred are votes that come from a defeated candidate.

3. Simplified Table

This format was adapted from a report used by Arlington, Virginia for their single and multi-winner ranked choice voting contests.



CONSOLIDATED MULTNOMAH COUNTY, WASHINGTON COUNTY, AND CLACKAMAS COUNTY ELECTION RESULTS
City of Portland Auditor
UNOFFICIAL PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Candidate	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7
Emily Evans	24% 83,041 votes	24% 83,041 votes	24% 84,133 votes +1,092	25% 85,225 votes +1,092	26% 88,501 votes +3,276	32% 101,300 votes +12,799	48% 147,737 votes +46,437
Maya Martinez	22% 77,903 votes	22% 77,903 votes	23% 77,903 votes	23% 77,903 votes	24% 80,088 votes +2,185	30% 96,182 votes +16,094	X
Henry Harrison <i>Leading</i>	22% 76,876 votes	22% 76,876 votes	23% 80,151 votes +3,275	24% 81,243 votes +1,092	28% 93,257 votes +12,014	37% 118,375 votes +25,118	52% 158,819 votes +40,444
Jamal Jenkins	21% 72,483 votes	21% 72,483 votes	21% 72,484 votes +1	22% 73,576 votes +1,092	22% 74,671 votes +1,095	X	X
Uncertified Write In	6% 19,791 votes	6% 19,791 votes	6% 19,791 votes	6% 19,791 votes	X	X	X
Certified Charlie	3% 9,863 votes	3% 9,863 votes	3% 9,863 votes	X	X	X	X
Certified Alice	2% 5,459 votes	2% 6,551 votes +1,092	X	X	X	X	X
Certified Bart	0% 1,092 votes	X	X	X	X	X	X

RCV Results Website

Election results from all Oregon counties are typically posted to the Oregon Secretary of State’s election night reporting website. However, the State’s software is not currently capable of reporting ranked choice voting contests. For this reason, Multnomah County was required to be the sole source of RCV results for the City of Portland’s candidate contests.

The Elections Division worked closely with members of the Department of County Assets web team to design and develop rcvresults.multco.us, a stand alone website for presenting the consolidated Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas County results for City of Portland RCV contests.



HOME

- > City of Portland Auditor
- > City of Portland Councilor District 1
- > City of Portland Councilor District 2
- > City of Portland Councilor District 3
- > City of Portland Councilor District 4
- > City of Portland Mayor

Learn more about ranked choice voting results [↗](#)

View additional Multnomah County election results [↗](#)

November 5, 2024 General Election

Consolidated Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas County Results for City of Portland Ranked Choice Voting Contests

Reports will be added to this site every day that ballots are tabulated, beginning with the first report released at 8:00 PM on Election Night. Use the sidebar menu to view and download result reports for each contest.

[View the full Election Results Schedule ↗](#)

For more information on ranked choice voting, visit multco.us/rcv [↗](#).

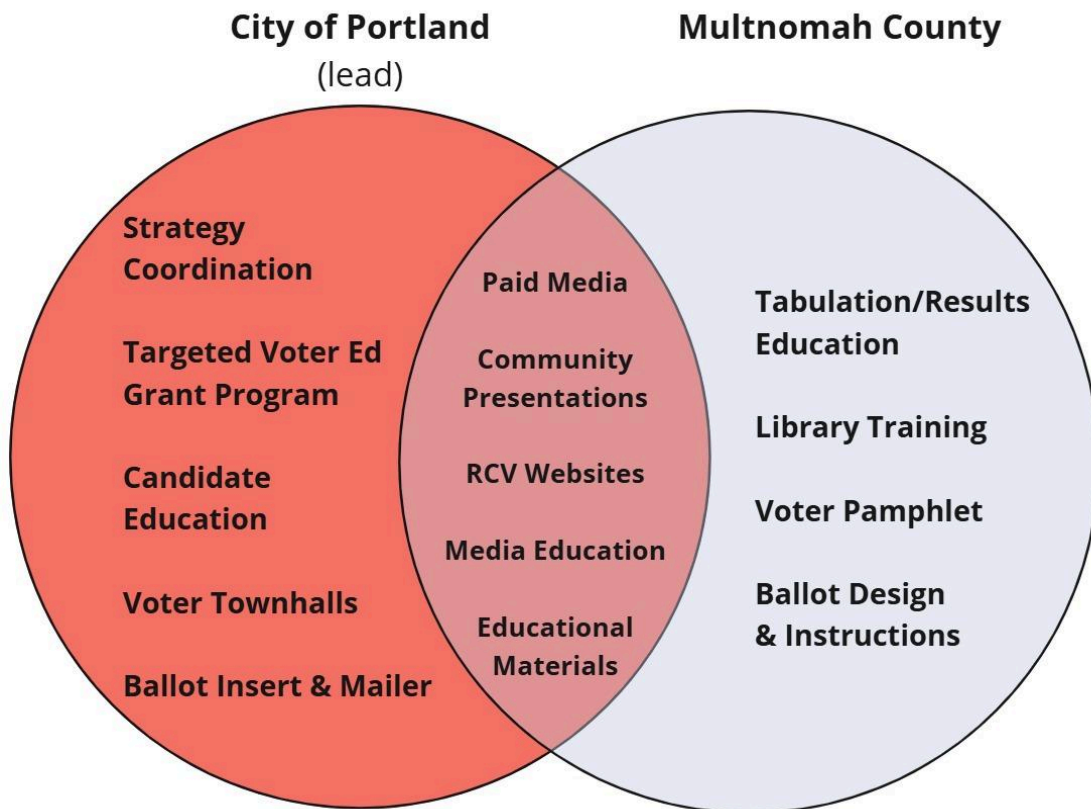
Section 2: Voter Education

Roles

In August 2023, the City of Portland and Multnomah County entered into a memorandum of understanding to define their roles in RCV voter education for the November 2024 General Election. The roles were defined as follows:

- The City of Portland agreed to develop and implement a Citywide voter education campaign to ensure Portlanders understood the new voting system.
- Multnomah County agreed to support the City's voter education campaign to familiarize Portland voters with the use of RCV in the 2024 general election.

Both agreed to collaborate and consult on materials with the City leading the voter education and the County providing support through feedback, fact checking, technical assistance, and targeted materials development as needed. Through this collaboration, the Elections Division and the City of Portland collectively reached an estimated 400,000+ Portland voters before the election.



Voter Education Activities

City of Portland Activities

The Transition Team of the office of the Chief Administrative Officer and the Portland Auditor's Elections Division shared the management of the voter education strategy for the City of Portland and carried out the following activities:

- Paid Media Campaigns
- Community Town Halls
- Community Event Tabling
- Citywide Mailer
- Mock RankedVote Elections
- Media Education (in collaboration with Multnomah County)

A full report on the City's voter education plans and activities can be found in the [City of Portland Transition Team Voter Education Report](#)

Portland Votes Grant Program

In addition to the work of the Transition Team and the Portland Elections Division, the Portland Votes 2024 Grant Program was a City-led effort that awarded \$210,000 to 11 organizations to support voter education activities. The awarded grants provided culturally responsive outreach and education to reach voters from the City's [priority populations](#), including from Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color and groups who have historically faced systemic barriers to voting and to engagement with their city government.

The Multnomah County Elections Division supported this program by participating in the grant application review process, offering technical expertise to grantees as needed, and hosting a tour of the Elections Building for grantees.

More information on the grant program can be found at www.portland.gov/vote/grants and the [Portland Votes 2024 Program Report](#).

Multnomah County Activities

In addition to the regular, ongoing efforts of the Election Divisions' Voter Education and Outreach (VEO) program to identify and remove barriers to voter participation in underserved communities through building relationships, community engagement and targeted education and outreach opportunities, the Elections Division organized education and media campaigns that were specific to ranked choice voting.

Media Education

In collaboration with the City of Portland and community partners, Multnomah County presented detailed education about the mechanics of ranked choice voting and results reporting to local media outlets over the course of four formal events – two hosted by the City of Portland, one by University of Oregon School of Journalism, and one by the County – in addition to several individual sessions with reporters and news rooms. Over 20 media outlets were reached through the County’s media education efforts.

Community Outreach Events

The County attended all City-led town halls, tabled at community festivals, gave presentations and mock elections at community events, and led trainings for Multnomah County Library staff and 311 telephone line operators for a total of 35 events with over 10,000 attendees.

Paid Media Campaigns

In collaboration with the Portland Auditor’s Elections Division, the County developed a targeted paid media campaign that focused on reaching the City’s priority populations through:

- TriMet bus ads
- Billboard advertising (focused primarily in City of Portland District 1)
- Advertisements in neighborhood and culturally-specific newspapers
- Univision television, email, social media, and digital advertising (all presented in Spanish)

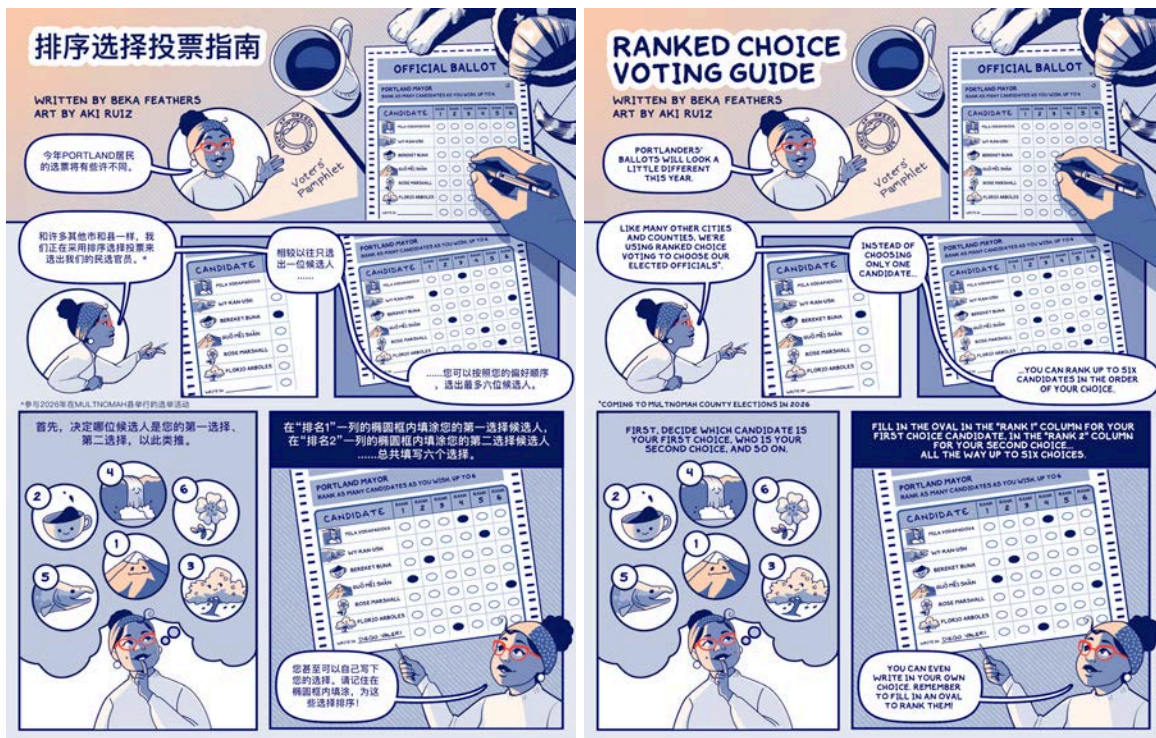
Media Education Events	4 events 20+ outlets reached
Voter Outreach Events	35 events 10,000+ attendees
Paid Media: Billboards and Busses	145,958 impressions (bus) 500,000+ impressions (billboard)
Paid Media: Local Newspapers	Ads in 6 neighborhood and culturally-specific papers 100,000+ impressions
Paid Media: Univision	TV, web, email, and social advertisements 973,641 impressions

Multnomah County Educational Materials

The Elections Division developed the following RCV education materials. Each were made available online, at community events, in libraries, and at the Elections Division office:

Comics

The County engaged the same artists used by the City to create [a comic to explain the City's transition](#) to a new form of government (including ranked choice voting), the County produced a two-page comic that explains how to fill out a ranked choice ballot. The comic was translated into the County's supported languages – English, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Somali, Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese.



Comic written by Beka Feathers, Artwork by Aki Ruiz

The comic in all languages can be downloaded from [the County website](#).

Videos

The Elections Division worked with a local media firm to create animated educational videos that explain what ranked choice voting is and how to fill out a ranked choice voting ballot. Two versions of the video were created and translated into all of the County's supported languages:

1. Long version (approx 5 minutes) - The longer version shows voters how to fill out a ballot and additionally offers an explanation of single-winner RCV tabulation.
2. Short version (approx 90 seconds) - The shorter version solely focuses on how to fill out a ballot. This video was created with short-form social media platforms in mind.

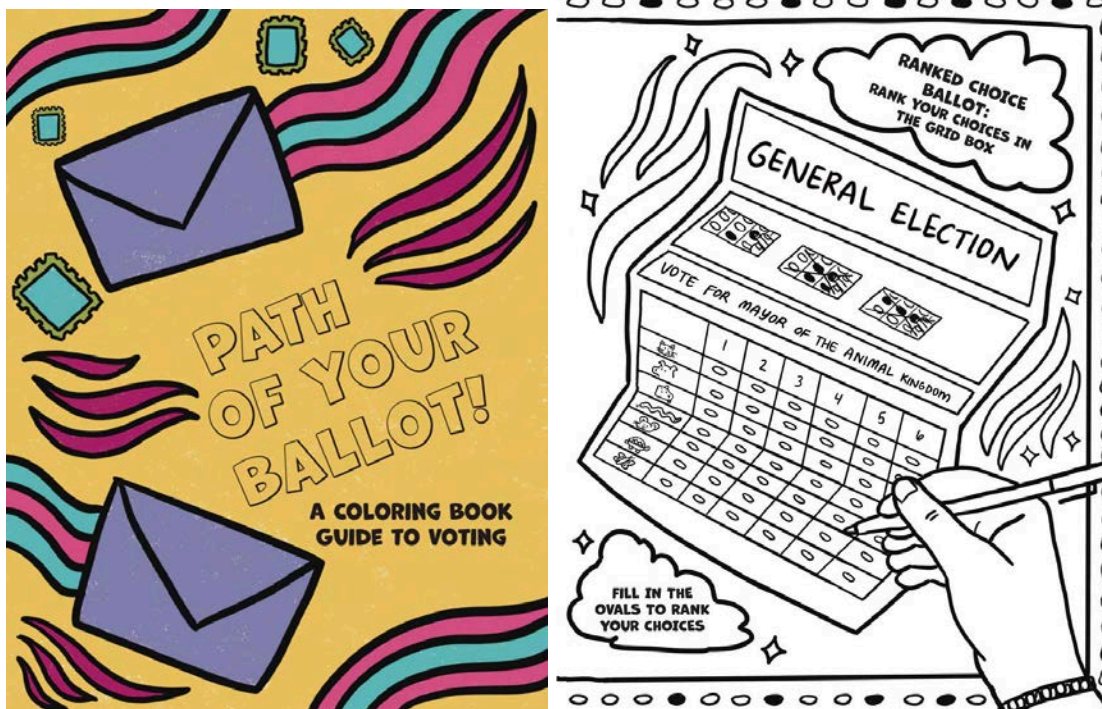


Videos created by Lara Media

Both long and short versions of the video in all six languages can be viewed [online](#).

Coloring Books

The Elections Division worked with a local artist to develop a multi-page coloring book that is youth-focused, but appropriate for all ages.



Artwork by Shay Mirk

PDFs of the coloring book in all languages can be downloaded from [the County website](#).

RCV Webpages

The Elections Division developed multco.us/rcv and several additional webpages that provided information to voters about ranked choice voting, including explanations of how to mark an RCV ballot, how tabulation works, and key terminology used in results reports. All information about RCV was translated into the County's supported languages: English, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Somali, Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese.

Mock Elections

The City purchased a registration for rankedvote.co – an online software that allows voters to practice ranked choice voting with mock elections – and provided a subscription for County use. The Elections Division created several [mock elections](#) that were shared on the County website and at events.

City-Designed Resources

In addition to the County-designed resources, the County shared several voter education materials that were developed by the City of Portland, including:

- An [informational insert](#) that was included in all RCV ballot packages
- A [citywide mailer](#) that went to all households with a Portland address

Section 3: Election Outcomes

Results

The County-built website rcvresults.multco.us was the sole source of the consolidated Multnomah County, Clackamas County, and Washington County results for the City of Portland's ranked choice voting contests for Mayor, Auditor and City Councilors.

RCV Results were posted in accordance with the posted elections results schedule for the November 2024 General Election:

** Ranked choice voting contest update times.*

Election Day, 11/5

*8:00 p.m.

10:00 p.m.

Wednesday, 11/6

12:00 midnight

2:00 a.m.

*6:00 p.m.

Thursday, 11/7

*6:00 p.m.

Friday, 11/8

*6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, 11/13 (the day after postmarked ballot deadline)

*6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, 11/27 (includes challenge cures from 11/26 deadline)

*6:00 p.m.

Monday, 12/2 (certification deadline)

*6:00 p.m.

One additional preliminary results update was posted on the morning of **Saturday, November 9** for a total of eight preliminary results updates before final results were posted on December 2.

Each results update and the final results reports contained the following information:

1. A clickable bar chart visual of the results
2. A simplified table of the results
3. A detailed tabular report (available in HTML, PDF, and CSV formats)
4. The JSON data file that was used in RCTab to tabulate the results so that each results update could be independently verified
5. An SHA-512 hash verification code that ensured the accuracy of any downloaded file

Post-Election Audit

Oregon law⁴ requires a post-election audit of election results. This is traditionally accomplished through a partial hand recount of ballots from specific precincts or ballot batches and contests, the results of which are then compared to vote tally system results. The precincts or ballot batches and contests to be included in the audit are selected by the Secretary of State at random. For the November 2024 General Election, none of the City of Portland contests were selected to be audited.

However, understanding that there is immense value in performing an audit of the first RCV contests for the City of Portland, the Elections Division volunteered to be included in a Secretary of State risk-limiting audit (RLA) pilot project. An RLA is an increasingly common style of audit that checks a random sample of paper ballots to give a statistical level of confidence that the outcome of an election is correct.

The Elections Division has been working closely with the Secretary of State to prepare for the RLA; the ballots that will be included in the RLA are stored securely. The Oregon Secretary of State has set the timeline for the post-election risk-limited audit of the RCV contests to occur after the May 2025 Primary Election and we anticipate having the final results of the RLA in June 2025.

⁴ ORS 254.529 (1) provides county clerks with a choice of post-election audit procedures: either a hand count of ballots which is compared to vote tally system results, or a risk-limiting audit. Procedures for a hand count are described in ORS 254.529 (2)-(9). Procedures for a risk-limiting audit are described in ORS 254.532. ORS 258.150-.300 describes additional procedures for automatic or demand recounts, such as for races that come within a specific margin or can be requested by a campaign.

Voting Patterns

The Multnomah County Elections Division produced a post-election [Ballot Data Report](#) to provide comprehensive data on how voters across Portland, as well as within individual City Council districts⁵, engaged with their ballots for ranked choice voting contests. The following data comes from pages 5-7 of the report.

Turnout

Turnout for City of Portland contests

Voters who returned a City of Portland ballot and voted in at least one City of Portland candidate contest, relative to the number of registered voters for the contest.

District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	City of Portland
54.84% (55,139)	73.94% (88,079)	76.46% (97,954)	76.40% (91,797)	71.16% (332,969)

Turnout per City of Portland contest

Voters who had valid markings on their ballots in a given contest, in relation to the total number of registered voters for the contest.

Auditor	Mayor	City Council, District 1	City Council, District 2	City Council, District 3	City Council, District 4
40.31% (188,630)	66.24% (309,963)	42.64% (42,871)	64.77% (77,157)	65.97% (84,515)	63.85% (76,717)

Rate of undervote per contest

Auditor	Mayor	City Council, District 1	City Council, District 2	City Council, District 3	City Council, District 4
43.02% (143,251)	6.36% (21,166)	20.80% (11,470)	11.80% (10,393)	13.11% (12,839)	15.76% (14,465)

⁵ A detailed map of Portland City Council districts can be viewed on the City of Portland website: <https://www.portland.gov/council/districts>

Rate of undervote between contests - Vote for Mayor with undervote for City Council

District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	All Districts
12.00% (6617)	7.39% (6509)	8.32% (8153)	9.97% (9156)	9.42% (30,435)

Rate of rank column usage per contest

	0 Ranks	1 Rank	2 Ranks	3 Ranks	4 Ranks	5 Ranks	6 Ranks
Auditor	43.02% (143,251)	55.06% (183,331)	1.92% (6387)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mayor	6.36% (21,166)	13.68% (45,550)	15.58% (51,862)	24.35% (81,063)	15.17% (50,518)	7.17% (23,862)	17.70% (58,948)
City Council, District 1	20.80% (11,470)	10.31% (5684)	5.41% (2982)	15.35% (8466)	8.76% (4830)	6.33% (3489)	33.04% (38,934)
City Council, District 2	11.80% (10,393)	6.83% (6016)	4.63% (4081)	14.74% (12,981)	10.07% (8867)	7.73% (6807)	44.20% (38,934)
City Council, District 3	13.11% (12,839)	6.02% (5892)	4.29% (4205)	16.29% (15,960)	9.16% (8974)	8.07% (7906)	43.06% (42,178)
City Council, District 4	15.76% (14,465)	5.89% (5405)	4.05% (3715)	16.69% (15,323)	10.50% (9638)	7.71% (7078)	39.41% (36,173)

Voting Errors

A core focus of the City and County’s voter education efforts was the prevention of common RCV voting errors: repeat rankings, skipped rankings and overvotes. For each of these errors, City Code 2.08.030 defined how the voter's intent would be interpreted so that if a ballot marking was made invalid due to an error, other markings on the ballot could still be counted. Of the errors, overvotes were of the greatest concern as they make it impossible to count a person’s vote for the candidate(s) who were selected as a part of an overvote.

	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6
Ahmed Abdl	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bobby Baker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Cindy Chen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Darnell Douglas	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Franklin Fisher	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harold Hakanson	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Isabella Ibarra	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Joseph (Joey) Jenkins	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kwame Kwon	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

An overvote occurs when a voter marks ovals for multiple candidates in the same rank column. Pursuant to City of Portland ranked choice voting code 2.08.030, for any ballot that contained an overvote, the overvote was skipped and the voter’s vote was transferred to the next highest-ranked active candidate on the voter’s ballot, if any, in the tabulation process.

Rate of overvote in the Mayor contest

Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6
0.69% (2146)	0.57% (1780)	0.57% (1767)	0.50% (1536)	0.44% (1364)	0.50% (1537)

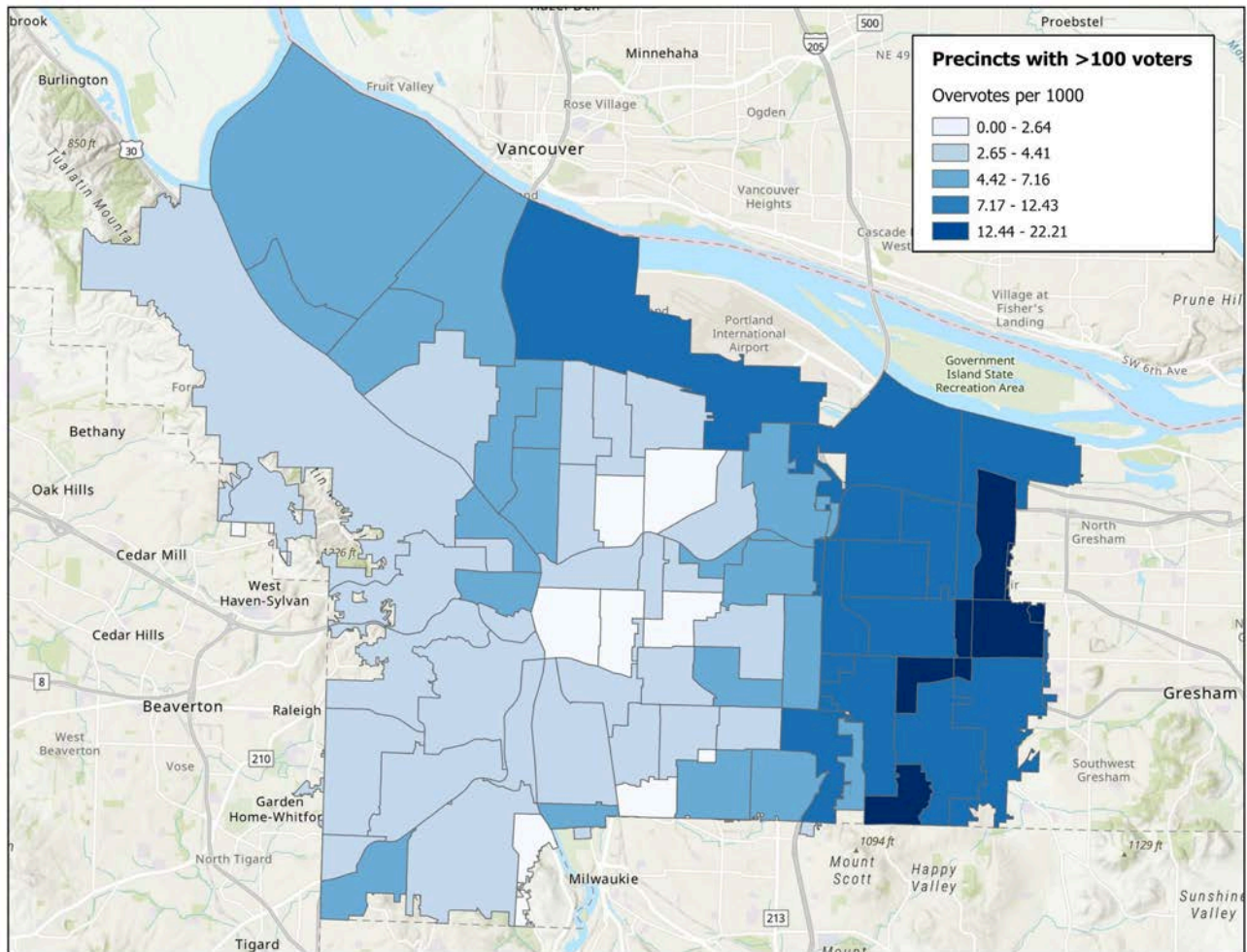
Rate of overvote in City Council contests

	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6
District 1	2.11% (906)	1.68% (722)	1.58% (679)	1.44% (618)	1.20% (518)	1.14% (490)
District 2	0.79% (608)	0.51% (393)	0.43% (329)	0.43% (333)	0.32% (247)	0.34% (264)
District 3	0.66% (650)	0.42% (355)	0.38% (318)	0.32% (273)	0.28% (253)	0.29% (246)
District 4	0.90% (688)	0.37% (284)	0.31% (239)	0.28% (213)	0.24% (187)	0.23% (179)

Overvotes by Precinct

Using the cast vote records from the November 2024 RCV contests, Multnomah County staff performed a precinct-level analysis and found that nearly all precincts with over 100 voters⁶ in District 1 exhibited higher rates of overvote than those in other districts. Additionally, several precincts in District 2 showed higher rates of overvote.⁷

This information will help to inform targeted voter education efforts that are dedicated to decreasing rates of overvote.



November 2024 Overvotes in City of Portland Precincts

⁶ In precincts with very few voters, an overvote on one ballot can grossly inflate the overall rate of overvote in the precinct. To account for that and provide a more accurate overview of the precinct-level occurrence of overvotes, precincts with fewer than 100 voters have been removed from the analysis.

⁷ A detailed map of Portland City Council districts can be viewed on the City of Portland website: <https://www.portland.gov/council/districts>

Voting Errors and Overvotes in Context

A study published in *Political Behavior* in March 2025 analyzed the cast vote records from several RCV contests across the United States – including several jurisdictions who were using the voting method for the first time – and found that nearly 1 in 20 (4.8%) voters improperly marked their ballot in at least one way⁸. The study additionally found evidence that these voting errors tended to be higher in areas with more racial minorities, lower-incomes, and lower levels of educational attainment. These findings about general voting error rates and patterns in other jurisdictions are largely consistent with the voting patterns from the 2024 RCV contests.

There is not, however, a readily available means of specific comparison for the rates of overvote in the November 2024 City of Portland RCV contests, owing to the use of universal vote-by-mail in Oregon. Portland is the largest universal vote-by-mail jurisdiction in the nation to implement RCV and the only universal vote-by-mail jurisdiction in the nation with single and multi-winner RCV contests on the ballot. Rates of voting errors, including overvotes, are lower in vote-in-person jurisdictions, as errors can be caught and corrected by voters before they submit their ballots. Information on how to correct a voting error was provided to voters in the voters pamphlet, in a ballot insert, and on our website; however, with mail-in ballots, once the ballot is received by the County, there is no way for the voter to make changes or corrections.

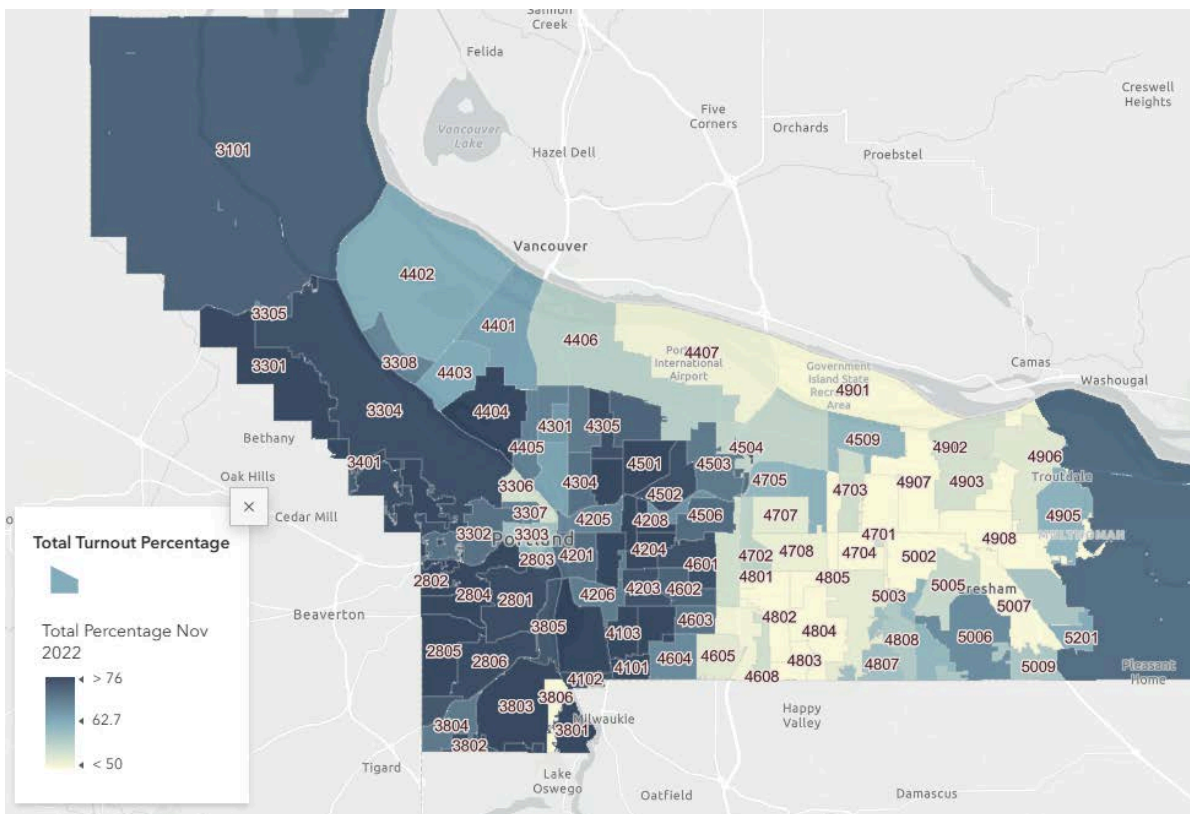
Multnomah County Elections Division will continue to track and analyze the rate of overvote in ranked choice voting elections and seeks to provide continued and expanded education about voting errors and corrections with the goal of lowering the rate of overvote across all precincts.

⁸ Pettigrew, S., Radley, D. Overvotes, Overranks, and Skips: Mismarked and Rejected Votes in Ranked Choice Voting. *Polit Behav* (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-025-10028-4>

Voting Pattern Spotlight: City of Portland District 1

Comparative to other City of Portland districts, ballot data from the November 2024 RCV contests shows that District 1 experienced lower rates of voter participation and higher rates of voter error, especially overvotes.

While disappointing, this was not unanticipated. Based on data compiled by the Election Division's Voter Education and Outreach program, the majority of precincts in District 1 have historically exhibited lower voter turnout.⁹ Based on this, the City of Portland had identified all residents of District 1 as one of their priority populations and targeted education and outreach was done in those communities in the leadup to the election.

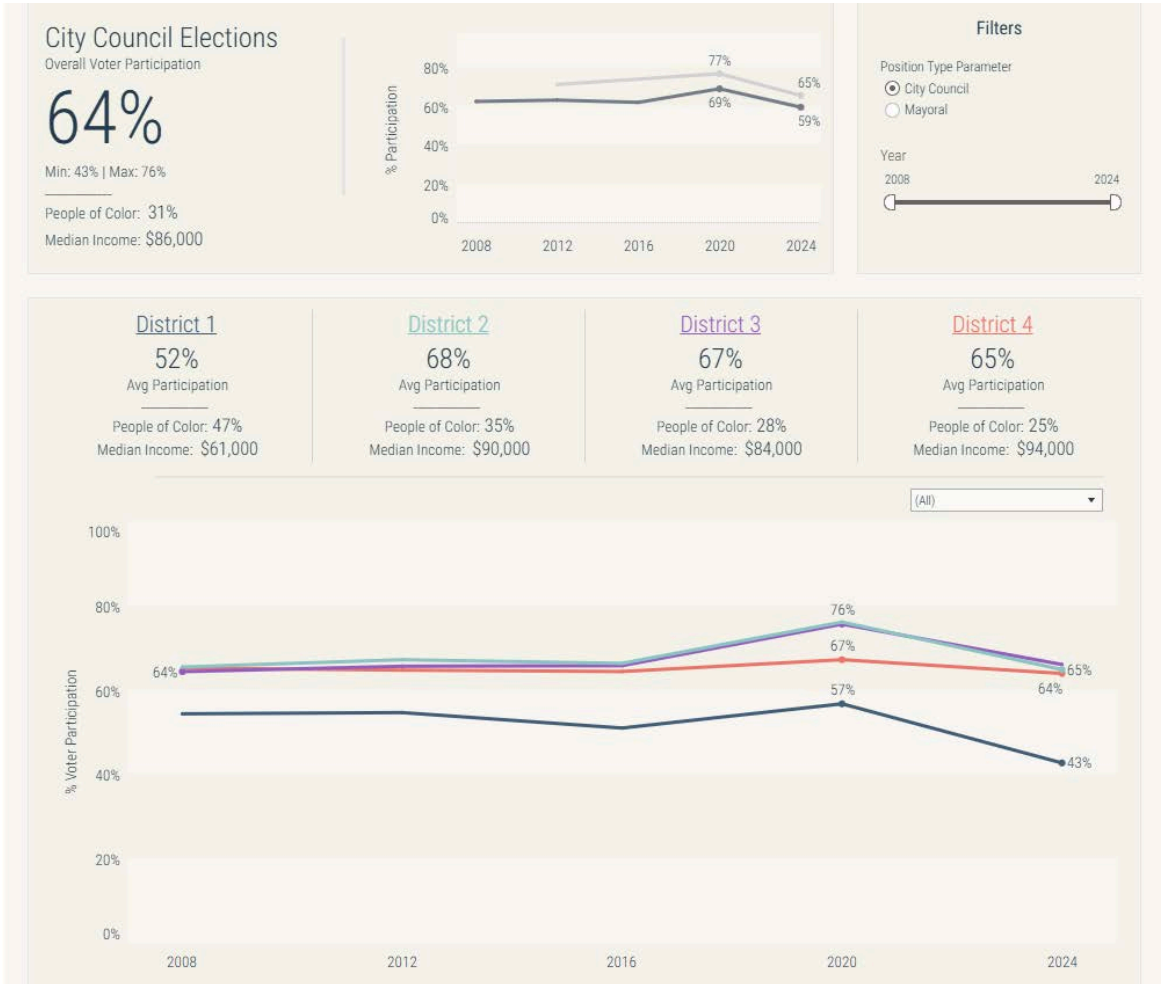


November 2022 Precinct-Level Turnout in Multnomah County

However, after the final certified results were released on December 2, 2024, North Star Civic Foundation produced a historical turnout analysis using the final cast vote records from the RCV contests. This analysis, posted to stumptownstats.org, showed that while voter participation decreased across all City of Portland Districts in the November 2024 General Election; there was a slightly larger decrease in participation in District 1.¹⁰

⁹ Source: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/16cb3e7d5ab2443b8c2b32d08f1c7a78>

¹⁰ Researchers from North Star were in communication with the Multnomah County Elections Division in the leadup to the November 2024 election and communicated that they were interested in compiling data about voter participation. All election data that they used in their analyses came directly from the Elections Division.



Stumptown Stats November 2024 Turnout Dashboard

As District 1 has a lower median income and higher percentage of people of color than all other City of Portland districts, this disparity is an equity concern and will require ongoing focus and targeted voter education and outreach efforts.

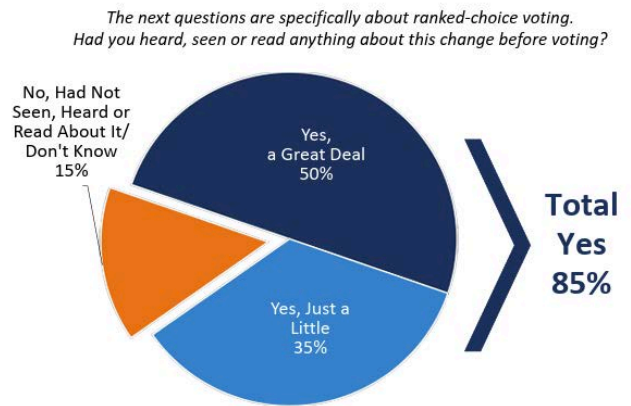
Section 4: Post Election Research and Reporting

Portland Auditor’s Survey

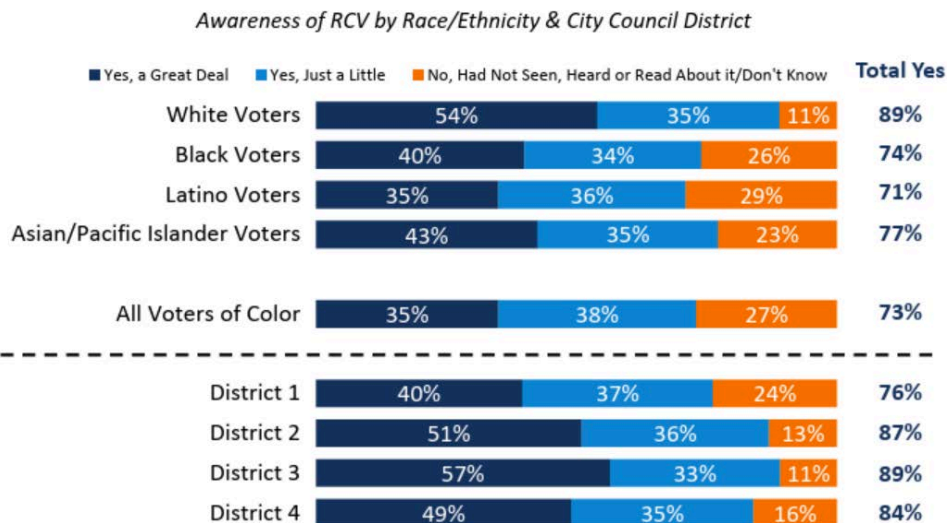
The Portland Auditor commissioned a post-election survey of Portland voters. Between October 28-November 11, 2024 a total of 1,658 voters were polled through telephone and online interviews with a focus on awareness and understanding of ranked choice voting.

Awareness

Of those polled, 85% of people said that they were aware of ranked choice voting before filling out their ballots.

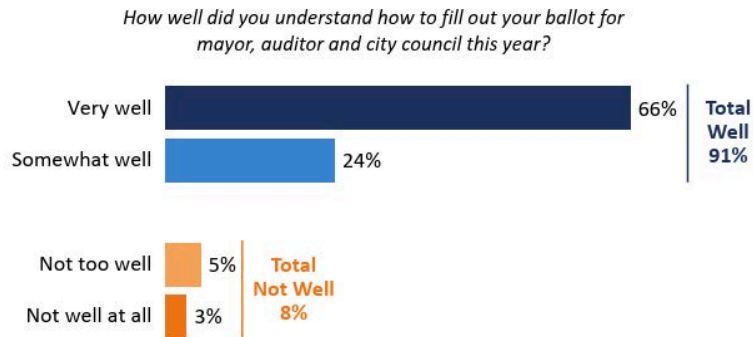


Though there was broad awareness across all demographics, levels were lower for voters in District 1 and for voters of color.



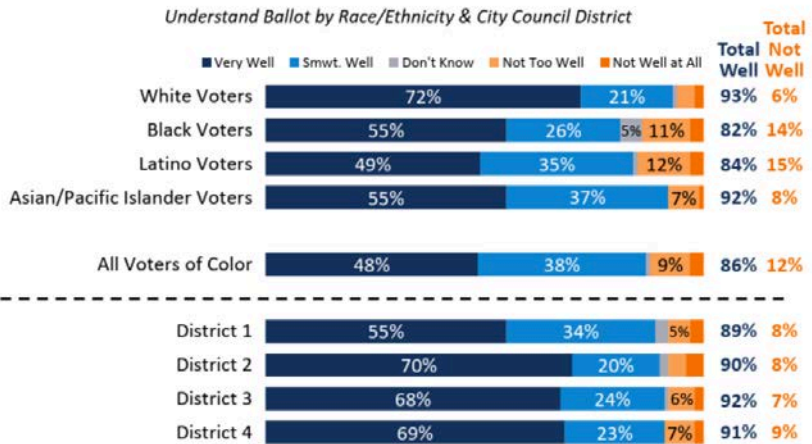
Of the 85% of people who were aware of RCV, the most common ways people learned about it were: local media, the citywide mailer, candidates, social media, and busses/billboards.

Understanding of Ranked Choice Voting

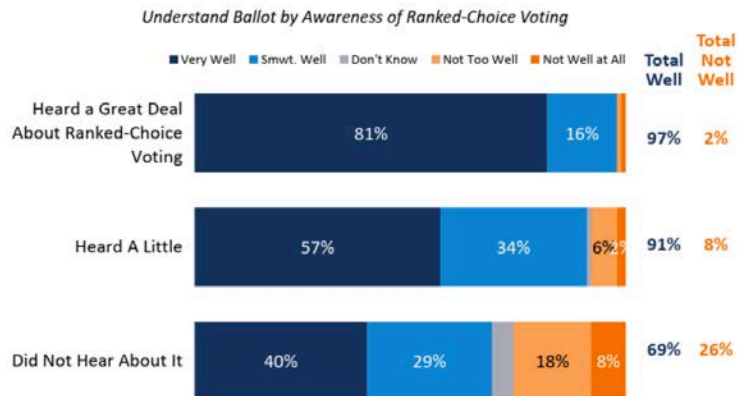


Of those polled, 91% of people reported that they understood how to fill out their RCV ballot.

However, voters in District 1 and all voters of color were less likely to report that they understood how to fill out an RCV ballot.



Polling additionally indicated that those who had heard of ranked choice voting were more likely to understand their ballot. Hence, a lack of awareness of ranked choice voting meant that voters were less likely to understand how to fill out their ballots.



County Focus Groups

Based on the finding from the Portland Auditor’s post-election polling and the voting patterns in the Ballot Data Report, the Elections Division worked with Portland-based research firm FM3 to organize two focus groups with District 1 voters:

- Focus Group 1 - CCD1: Portland District 1 voters in general
- Focus Group 2 - Bilingual Voters: Portland District 1 voters who speak languages other than English at home

Participants were otherwise recruited to generally reflect their segment of the electorate by age, gender, socioeconomic status and ideology. In these two moderated, two-hour discussions, respondents were presented with a range of open-ended questions to help understand their first impressions and opinions about the experience of voting in November 2024, with a specific focus on ballot instruction and preventing voting errors and the effectiveness of results reporting and explanations of tabulation.

Ballot Instructions and Voting Errors

With the aid of the ballot insert, ballot instructions, and information in the voters pamphlet, respondents found filling out their mock ballot very straightforward. Participants additionally appreciated the information about voting errors and how to correct them – it was reassuring to know that certain mistakes were common, and how those mistakes could still be counted.

City of Portland, Mayor (4-year term) Rank up to 6 candidates in the order of your choice.						
	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6
Ahmed Abdi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bobby Baker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cindy Chen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Darnell Douglas	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Franklin Fisher	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harold Hakanson	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Isabella Ibarra	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

City of Portland, Mayor (4-year term) Rank up to 6 candidates in the order of your choice.						
	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6
Ahmed Abdi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bobby Baker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PICK 1 EACH COLUMN,

Mock ballots filled out by focus group participants

Many found the two-page ballot insert from the City of Portland helpful in understanding the “how” of using this method of voting. Several participants, and especially those in the bilingual group, noted that the visuals in the instructions were especially helpful, while finding the text based explanations a bit more difficult to follow.

	RANK 1	RANK 2	RANK 3	RANK 4	RANK 5	RANK 6
CANDIDATE A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE B	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE C	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE D	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE E	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE F	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Green highlighting was used by participants to indicate what information they found most useful.



Sometimes less is more. Simple to the point instructions. Pictures probably work better for the younger generation because of tech/phones. - **CCD 1 Voter**

Understanding Tabulation

After examining the mock ballots and voting instructions, participants were asked about their understanding of the tabulation process and shown various forms of explanatory resources, including:

- The Election Divisions website with RCV information
- The educational video (long version) describing single-winner tabulation that the County produced
- An education video describing multi-winner tabulation produced by the Oregonian ([available here](#))
- An educational video describing multi-winner tabulation produced by Rose City Reform ([available here](#))

While detailed and precise, participants found the text-only descriptions of tabulation on the County website difficult to understand, particularly for the multi-winner system.

All I can say is thank God for computers.
– CCD 1 Voter after reading about multi-winner tabulation

Single-Winner Tabulation Video

Voters expressed audible relief once they had seen the County’s video. This video helped make clear the purpose of using more than one rank – they were able to clearly understand that selecting more choices allows their ballot to continue to factor into the rounds of counting. However, across both groups, participants did not know that the video was available and agreed that it would have been helpful for their own understanding and for sharing with family and friends and immediately suggested the many places they wished they had seen it before the election (e.g. TV, YouTube, TikTok).



Still from Multnomah County RCV video

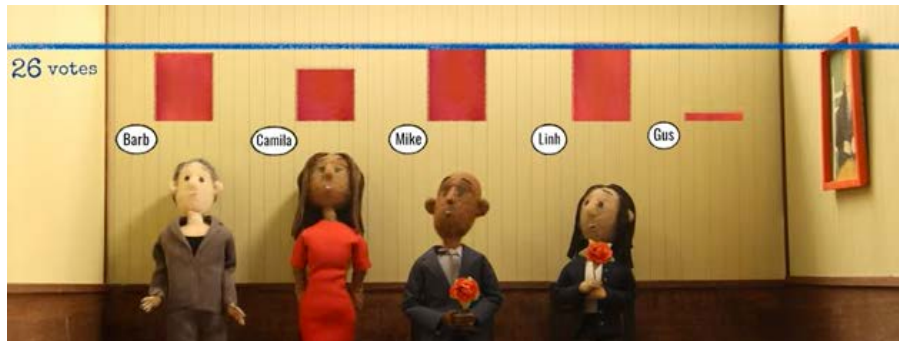
Bilingual participants, in particular, were glad to know that the video was additionally available in multiple languages.

Where was this video five months ago?
– Bilingual Voter

I think also the people who are running, it would be good for them to use these tools. – Bilingual Voter

Multi-Winner Tabulation Videos

With a grounding in single-winner tabulation, participants felt that the videos clarified the process and rationale for multi-winner ranked choice contests. Understanding that mathematical equations are used to find three winners who are preferred by the most people is the crucial bottom line – the details of calculations and percentages didn't matter as much.



Still from the Rose City Reform video

Don't ask me how to calculate, but if you asked me why, I do conceptually understand why we do it. ... We have to be able to get three candidates. If they're not at the threshold you've got to start counting the votes that already went to the winners of the ballots that were submitted. You have to keep counting so that you can actually get all three candidates declared – **Bilingual Voter**

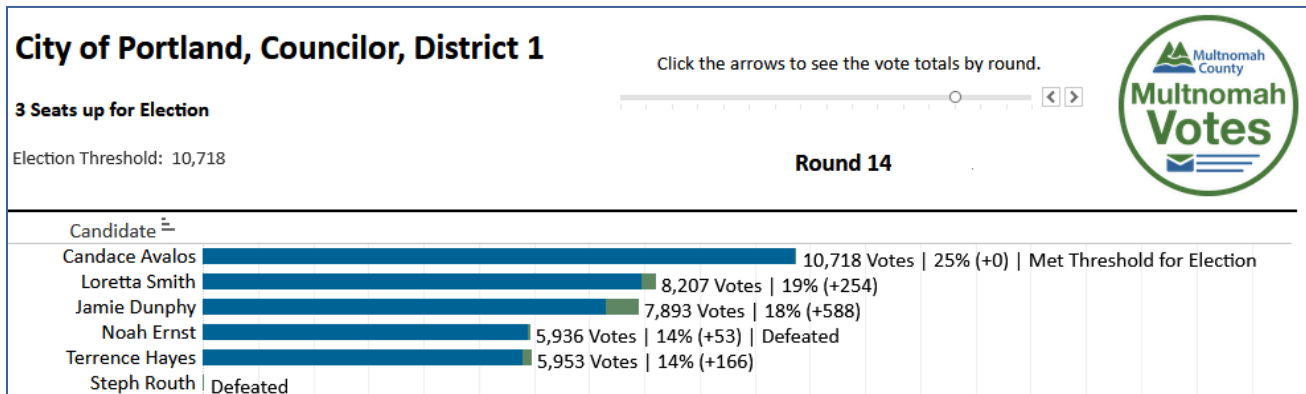


Though both videos were helpful, participants *especially* liked the Oregonian's video with the examples of donuts (pictured), which is something they have an opinion about and can play out in their head (imagining picking 12 for the office or some such scenario), rather than generic candidates.

It almost encourages me to want to vote for all six ranks at this point, knowing how it's counted. – **CCD 1 Voter**

Understanding the Results

Participants were shown the results reports posted to rcvresults.multco.us. Both groups found them intuitive to understand, enlightening about how their individual votes were counted, and interesting to look at; however, they were surprised to know these reports existed. None of the participants had seen any of the County-produced results reporting prior to the focus groups.



I didn't understand how my ranks two through four would have affected. Now I know where that went. – **Bilingual Voter**

Your vote is not just gone. It's being counted somewhere. – **CCD 1 Voter**

Key Takeaways

Qualitative research, such as focus groups, does not directly measure the frequency of opinions and attitudes. Accordingly, the results of these discussions may be considered suggestive of the attitudes of Portland voters but cannot be considered to represent their views with any kind of statistical precision.

That said, the findings from the focus groups further affirm the findings from the Portland Auditor's post-election polling, the Ballot Data report, and from the Election Division's interactions with voters and lead us to the following key takeaways:

Key Takeaway 1: The existing educational materials and resources produced by the City, the County, and community partners are largely sufficient for helping voters understand both how to fill out their RCV ballots and how their votes will be counted.

Small changes can be made to increase the amount of visuals on instructional materials and to provide additional detail about tabulation as appropriate.

Key Takeaway 2: The primary challenge for the RCV elections in 2026 and beyond is achieving equitable access to educational information by performing targeted outreach to ensure all voters are reached.

Specifically, additional and expanded outreach is needed with the following voter groups:

- District 1 voters in general
- Voters in precincts with higher levels of overvote
- All voters of color
- Bilingual voters

YouTube for Gen Z. We are on social media, our attention spans are lower. 3 to 4 min YouTube videos with visuals are good/great. 5 min max. 10 min to go more in depth for the people actually really trying to understand in a more educated way -- the "nerds" you could say. Promote different languages too. – **Bilingual Voter**

Your vote really does matter! – **CCD 1 Voter**

Section 5: Impacts of RCV on Elections Administration

Election Impacts

The 2024 General Election saw several changes in voter behavior and election administration processes. Some of these changes are clearly attributable to the implementation of RCV; with others, it is premature to say – their causes are unclear and will require additional study as more data is collected from future RCV elections.

CHANGE	RCV IMPACT
Lower voter participation	Unlikely. Turnout was down across the county and state. The rate of turnout was not unique to Portland.
Later voter participation	Potentially. Later turnout appeared more unique to Multnomah County than other counties in the state; however, polling of voters would be necessary to understand if and how RCV affected when they turned in their ballots.
Increased ballot processing time	Yes. RCV added complexity to each step of ballot processing and increased the amount of staff and time needed.
Increased number of replacement ballots	Potentially. There was a 40% increase in the number of replacement ballots requested by voters, which contributed to a 200% increase in front office interactions with voters. While the introduction of RCV likely contributed to this increase, there is not a clear, data-driven line of causality at this time.
Increased voter education	Yes. RCV requires education that will need to be reintroduced and explained to voters before each RCV election.
Increased number of candidates	Unclear. RCV may increase the number of candidates who run. However, increases can also be attributed to a lack of incumbents, low barrier to candidacy, and lack of primaries for City of Portland.
Multi-page ballot	Yes. The layout of RCV ballots necessitated a separate page for this election.
New results reporting needs	Yes. Tabulation and reporting RCV results requires different formats with more complexity.

Further Detail: Impact on Election Administration Operations

In addition to one-time preparatory tasks – updating voting system software, tri-county IGA, hand recount and audit procedures, results reporting format design – the introduction of RCV necessitated several changes to the processes of the Elections Division. These are not one-time impacts due to first-time implementation, but represent ongoing changes to election administration processes.

Process	Increase in Time to Complete	Description
Ballot Design	100%	An additional ballot page with increased complexity doubled the amount of time spent designing ballots for each precinct.
Ballot Scanning	80%	In addition to 349,181 non-RCV general election ballot pages, elections workers scanned an additional 332,969 ballot pages.
Ballot Adjudication	125%	RCV ballot pages increased the amount of adjudication necessary by increasing the number of ballot pages by 80%. Additionally, adjudication for each RCV ballot page took substantially more time than for non-RCV ballot pages due to the number of ovals that needed to be examined for each contest.
Ballot Extraction	25%	It took workers more time to examine each ballot package and confirm if it contained an RCV ballot page in addition to a non-RCV ballot page.
Ballot Opening Boards	40%	Election workers opened and flattened 332,969 RCV ballots in addition to 349,181 non-RCV ballots, substantially increasing the time to open ballots.
Voter Assistance Team¹¹ Visits	10%	The time to assist voters increased for those who opted to fill out their RCV ballot page.
Results Reporting	300%	RCV results reporting was an entirely different and concurrent process with non-RCV results reporting, which required additional staffing and time. <i>Note: We aim to improve the efficiency of this process in the future; however, it will still require additional staff.</i>

¹¹ The Voter Assistance Team is a group of specialized election workers who provide assistance to voters with disabilities.

Budget Impacts

The process of RCV implementation began in January 2023 (FY 2023); however, no costs beyond the time of existing permanent staff time were incurred until FY 2024.

FY 2024-2025 Expenses

Item	FY 2024	FY 2025	Total
Additional Ballot Page	-	\$313,950	\$313,950
Project Manager	\$154,294	\$163,000	\$317,293
Media Buys	-	\$88,391	\$88,391
Educational Materials	\$82,920	\$2,960	\$85,880
Research	-	\$24,000	\$24,000
Translation	\$614	\$8,960	\$9,574
Voting Software	\$225,000	-	\$225,000
On-Call Staffing	-	\$6,485	\$6,485
Permanent Staff Overtime	-	\$15,080	\$15,080
Results Reporting	-	\$22,910	\$22,910
Total Expenses	\$462,827	\$645,736	\$1,108,563

One-Time Investments

Items	Total
Voting software, educational material design, results format design, research	\$353,910

Anticipated Ongoing Expenses

Even Fiscal Years (General Election off-years)

Items	Total
Project manager to oversee RCV activities, printing and translation of educational materials	\$174,920

Odd Fiscal Years (General Election on-years)

Items	Total
Additional ballot page, project manager, media buys, educational material printing and translation, increased on-call staffing	\$598,826

Section 6: Implementation Evaluation

What: After the certification of results from the first RCV election on November 4, 2024, Election Division staff immediately began the process of evaluation of the implementation of ranked choice voting election administration processes and procedures.

Purpose: To reflect on the process, find what was done well and identify areas for improvement so that we can adapt and make changes as we move towards the next RCV election in 2026, when RCV will additionally be implemented for Multnomah County candidate contests.

Procedure: Information for the evaluation was collected from the following sources between December 2024 and March 2025:

1. *Interviews with Elections Division staff members*

- Full-time employees
- On-call team leads

2. *Interviews with External Partners and Advisors*

- City of Portland (Elections Division and Transition Team)
- Washington County
- Clackamas County
- Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center
- Center for Civic Design

3. *Review of data from existing reports*

- [Multnomah County Elections Division Ballot Data Report](#)
- [Multnomah County Elections Focus Group Report](#)
- [Portland City Auditor Preliminary Voter Education Report](#)
- [Portland City Auditor Post-Election Poll Results](#)
- [Portland Votes 2024 Program Report](#)

Guiding Values for Evaluation

When examining our work in the implementation of ranked choice voting, we used the following values to help identify successes, areas for improvement, and future considerations as we move forward with ranked choice voting election administration.

Effectiveness

Our work should produce the successful administration of a ranked choice voting election, in line with Portland charter and general best practices.

Efficiency

We should seek to achieve a reasonable balance between resources used relative to the results that we achieved.

Equity

The process should promote access to understanding and participating in ranked choice voting across race, culture, language, age, socioeconomic status, disability, and geographic location.

Accuracy

The information we present to the public and our partners about ranked choice voting should be correct and precise.

Transparency

We should proactively share information about ranked choice voting election administration with the public to build trust through openness and accept responsibility for our mistakes and decisions

Findings: Successes

Partnerships

The partnership with the City of Portland was effective, productive, and efficient and the activities outlined in the intergovernmental agreement with Clackamas and Washington Counties were smoothly and efficiently executed.

Ballot Processing

All RCV Ballots traveled through the system as planned and sorting, counting, and tabulation procedures were effective, accurate, and as efficient as possible. The voting system software would benefit from minor updates to improve the speed and efficiency of select actions, but overall, the process was smooth and will require few changes for future RCV elections.

Broad Voter Education

Citywide campaigns were effective and a vast majority of voters reported an awareness of RCV and an understanding of how to fill out their ballots, as reported by the the Portland Auditor post-election poll in which 85% of Portland voters reporting being aware of RCV before receiving their ballots and 91% expressed that they understood how to fill out their ballots.

Additionally, based on findings from the County's focus groups along with feedback from voters and community organizations, the County's educational materials – all translated into the County's six supported languages – provided sufficient information to explain RCV.

Media Education

Local media largely provided accurate and complete information about ranked choice voting. Results were reported conservatively and no contests were called prematurely. Post-election polling showed that the most common place that people learned about ranked choice voting was through local media and we look forward to continuing to provide the media with accurate information about how contests are tabulated and work closely with them to ensure that results are communicated effectively.

Data Transparency

All data that the Elections Division had available for the City of Portland RCV contests was shared publicly and in a timely fashion. Tabulation data was proactively released with each results update posted to rcvresults.multco.us, cast vote records were posted to

multnomahvotes.gov after final results were certified, and an independent verification of results was performed to ensure accuracy.

Results Reporting

The County's RCV results reporting website was easily accessible and results were reported accurately, transparently, in formats that provided varying levels of detail for different audiences, and in a timely manner starting on Election Night through final certification on December 2. Official results were transmitted to the City and State as planned.

Findings: Areas for Improvement

Results Reporting Efficiency

Though all three results reports were shared in an accurate, accessible and timely fashion, they took an excessive amount of staff time and effort to produce, most especially the Tableau bar charts. Feedback from voters indicated that the Tableau bar chart reporting format was the most intuitive to view and helped them understand how their votes were counted and, therefore, we hope to continue to produce them.

Targeted Voter Education

Based on findings on turnout, voting errors, and awareness and understanding of RCV, voter education efforts were insufficient in District 1 and with voters of color. Moving forward, we must ensure equitable access to education and outreach for voters in District 1, all voters of color, and for voters in other precincts who had higher levels of voting errors.

Additionally, research shows that voters had more difficulty with understanding their ballots for multi-winner contests. Research also indicated that voters report understanding better how to fill out their ballot when they broadly understand how votes are counted. Hence, additional targeted education about multi-winner tabulation should be provided.

Increased Data Transparency

The Elections Division experienced a significant increase in requests for election data from media, candidates, and other interested parties in November. Moving forward, the Division plans to proactively share additional RCV election data, including precinct-level tabulation¹², district-level turnout data and clear instructions for how and where to locate data.

Staff Education and Workload Planning

The implementation of ranked choice voting necessitated that all Election Division employees learned the particulars of new methods of election administration and voter education on a quick timeline, while additionally drastically increasing the amount of time and workload necessary to complete core election administration processes. To ensure the continued success of the RCV election administration, the Elections Division must continue and expand upon the amount and frequency of RCV education for staff, and additionally analyze staffing models with a goal of reducing/dispersing workloads in certain areas.

¹² Prior to the election, we were uncertain if precinct-level tabulation would be possible. Post-election, we were able to successfully produce precinct-level results. Public records, including precinct-level RCV tabulation, can be requested on the county's public records center:

[https://multco.govqa.us/WEBAPP/_rs/\(S\(nf2vf152s3dpi0xfjb1ojlst\)\)/supporthome.aspx](https://multco.govqa.us/WEBAPP/_rs/(S(nf2vf152s3dpi0xfjb1ojlst))/supporthome.aspx)

Additional Considerations

Though not included in the evaluation, there are two additional factors that provided challenges in the Election Divisions' implementation of RCV in 2024 that should be noted:

1. *Compressed Implementation Timeline.* The charter amendments passed by Portland voters in November 2022 required the implementation of ranked choice voting elections by November 2024. Two years presented a very tight timeline that limited the amount of planning, research and staff preparation time that was possible. While we were able to acquire and build the necessary tools and procedures to successfully administer the election, we look forward to more time for training, refinement and planning before the next RCV elections in November 2026.

2. *Long Candidate Lists.* The number of filed candidates in the City of Portland candidate contests (119) increased the amount of time that it took to accomplish ballot design, tabulation, results reporting, and, most especially, the production of the voters pamphlet. Additionally, the most common critical feedback from voters about the November 2024 General Election was frustration about the number of candidates to learn about and choose from. Though notable, this is not necessarily attributable to RCV alone, but rather to the transition to a new form of government that introduced 13 newly-created roles and no incumbents. It is anticipated that the number of candidates running for each City of Portland candidate contest will likely decrease in future elections now that there are incumbents in place.

Recommendations for Future RCV Elections

In preparation for the next ranked choice voting election in November 2026, the Multnomah County Elections Division should:

1) Continue to build upon the successful partnerships with the City of Portland, Washington County, and Clackamas County.

- Continue to coordinate all broad and targeted voter education and outreach efforts with the City of Portland's voter education staff
- Continue with the intergovernmental agreement for the coordinated administration of RCV elections as written
- Continue to meet regularly and find opportunities for increased collaboration and communication as needed

2) Develop a coordinated plan with the City of Portland for targeted voter outreach to District 1, precincts with higher levels of overvote errors, and all voters of color.

- Update the existing voter education memorandum of understanding to reflect the need to educate voters about using RCV for City AND County candidate contests
- Continue the Voter Education and Outreach program's work to develop meaningful relationships with community organizations who can support culturally and linguistically appropriate voter education
- Invest in targeted media and advertising campaigns that seek to point voters to the existing voter education resources

3) Continue to work with Clear Ballot Group to increase the efficiency of CB 2.5OR and RCTab software.

- Compile a list of suggested updates to CB 2.5OR to address database slowdowns and adjudication and reporting inefficiencies
- Meet regularly with the developers of both Clear Ballot and RCTab software to communicate ongoing needs and remain aware of updates

4) Develop a comprehensive RCV data sharing plan.

- Create a list of RCV data that will be shared and post it to the Election Division website prior to the election, along with directions for how/when/where to find it

- Work with the media to gain an understanding of their data needs and then ensure they know how/when/where to find data on the Elections Division website
- Consider recruiting a small pool of volunteers to provide ongoing independent verification of RCV preliminary results to maintain transparency and trust in the community

5) Develop a comprehensive RCV candidate education plan for County candidates.

- Candidates are a key part of the overall voter education strategy since many voters learn about voting directly from them
- Provide regular and ongoing educational opportunities for candidates to ask questions and learn about RCV tabulation, results reporting, and voting errors
- Ensure that candidates have access to all County-created educational materials to share in their campaigns

6) Continue to provide ranked choice voting education to local media outlets.

- Continue to collaborate with the City of Portland and other partners to continue to host informational briefings about RCV for local media
- Provide all educational materials – especially videos – for use by media outlets
- Refine and share guides that explain RCV tabulation and results reporting

7) Provide additional multi-winner tabulation explanations to voters.

- Share the existing educational videos from The Oregonian and Rose City Reform with voters, online and at community presentations as appropriate
- Produce additional illustrated visuals that explain how multi-winner contests are counted that can be translated, printed, and shared online

8) Continue and increase education about RCV for Elections Division employees.

- Provide ongoing education about RCV at bimonthly staff meetings
- Provide enhanced training about RCV, including the details of tabulation, to lead on-call workers
- Invite outside ranked choice voting experts to present to Elections Division employees

9) Continue to work with County IT to refine results reporting formats and post procedures.

- Identify potential efficiencies or automations with posting tableau visuals
- Explore alternate report formats that require less technical expertise to produce
- Develop an updated design of rcvresults.multco.us that can accommodate results for both City of Portland and Multnomah County candidate contests

10) Create staffing and workload models for ongoing RCV election administration processes and procedures.

- Analyze November 2024 ballot processing workflows to identify areas of slowdown or inefficiency and develop plans to increase staff support for select processes as needed
- Continue to check-in regularly with all full-time staff about workload increases due to RCV and plan for additional support as needed

Conclusion

The implementation of ranked choice voting for the November 2024 General Election was a major undertaking for the Multnomah County Elections Division. The short timeline for delivery combined with the breadth of changes that needed to be implemented presented challenges; however, the administration of the election was ultimately smooth and overall successful. All newly developed RCV systems and procedures operated according to plan and in line with best practices; results reporting was accurate, reliable, and timely; and voters broadly indicated an awareness and understanding of how to fill out their ballots using ranked choice voting.

As we move forward towards the implementation of ranked choice voting for all Multnomah County candidate contests in November 2026, the Elections Division looks forward to applying the data and learnings from 2024 to improve upon existing processes, striving for additional efficiency and transparency where possible, and continuing to work towards ensuring that all voters understand how to fill out their ranked choice voting ballots.

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Cross-Jurisdictional Partners

Portland Elections Division, City of Portland Transition Team, Clackamas County Elections Office, Washington County Elections Office

Advisors

Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center, Center for Civic Design

Additional Resources

[November 5, 2024 City of Portland RCV Election Results](#)

[Multnomah County Elections Division Ballot Data Report](#)

[Multnomah County RCV Website](#)

[Portland City Auditor Preliminary Voter Education Report](#)

[Portland City Auditor Post-Election Poll Results](#)

[City of Portland Voter Education Report](#)

[Portland Votes 2024 Program Report](#)

[City of Portland RCV Website](#)