

MEMORANDUM TO CITY COUNCIL

TO: City Council Chair Wharton
DATE: March 7, 2025
FROM: Keith Reynolds, City Recorder
William Crist, Elections Management Coordinator *WC*
SUBJECT: 2025 Municipal Election: SL County Estimate of Election Costs

ACTION REQUESTED: Confirmation of the City's intent to hold the 2025 Municipal Election by using the Ranked Choice Voting method

INTRODUCTION:

In 2024, the City Council opted to participate in the Municipal Alternate Voting Method Pilot Project, more commonly referred to as Ranked Choice Voting (RCV), for the 2025 Municipal Election. During the December 3, 2024 Work Session discussion, it was confirmed that small group meetings would be held to review the impact of a Primary Election in addition to a General Election with the Ranked Choice Voting Method. Small Group Meetings were held with Council Member Petro and Council Member Dugan, with materials being shared with the full Council.

The City Recorder's office has been informed Salt Lake County Elections office will not be offering election support services for a Primary Election when entities choose to participate in the Municipal Alternate Voting Method Pilot Project. This information, in addition to the discussions held with Council Members, has elevated the interest of the Recorder's office to confirm the decision of holding a Primary Election when participating in the Municipal Alternate Voting Method Pilot Project, otherwise termed Ranked Choice Voting.

The Declaration of Candidacy period, as well as the overall costs associated with administering an election through Salt Lake County are impacted by the requested confirmation. Salt Lake County has provided the estimates on costs to administer the election, assuming Salt Lake City will remain with the RCV Method, and without any additional races or ballot measures being added. On November 4, 2025, Salt Lake City will hold the 2025 Municipal General Election. The positions that will be on the ballot for the election will be Council District 1, Council District 3, Council District 5, and Council District 7.

Due to the manner of the election costs provided by the County, there are variables that are undefined due to the candidate filing timing; therefore, we have outlined the highest cost anticipated with the RCV method without a Primary Election to be **\$144,278**.

Salt Lake County has provided estimates on costs to administer the election, assuming Salt Lake City will remain with the RCV Method, and without any additional races or ballot measures appearing on the ballot. The main contributing factors to this cost are based on three considerations:

- A. Active Voters – 103,534 (as of 1/1/2025)
- B. Races appearing on the ballot
 - i. Council District 1
 - ii. Council District 3
 - iii. Council District 5
 - iv. Council District 7
- C. Other participating entities within Salt Lake County:
 - i. Participating in Primary/General Elections
 - ii. Participating in Ranked Choice Voting – the Municipal Alternate Voting Method Pilot Project (currently only Salt Lake City and Midvale)

In addition, an “*Election Administration Fee*” totaled at \$30,000 is now required by each participating city electing to work with Salt Lake County. The County is also requiring payment of the participatory portion of the \$26,500 “*Ranked Choice Voting Software Charge*”, split amongst the cities participating in Ranked Choice Voting. This will be covered by the FY25 allocated funds to the Recorder’s office.

In the upcoming budget year request and in budget amendment #5 for FY25, funding will be addressed for awareness and outreach.

REQUEST:

Does the Council support moving forward participating in the Municipal Alternate Voting Method Pilot Project without a Primary Election and engaging with Salt Lake County for Elections Administration?