



# ELECTIONS

# 1. RANKED CHOICE VOTING (RCV)

## How It Is Now

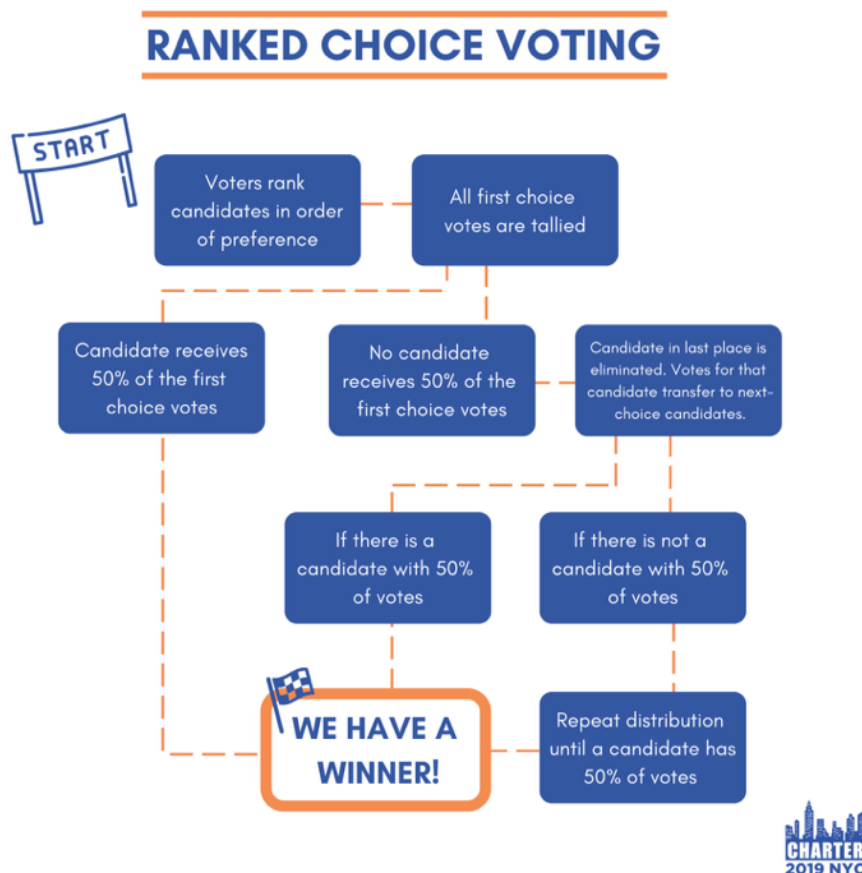
- If you've voted in an election in NYC, you know the drill: Usually the candidate with the most votes wins
  - In Mayoral, Public Advocate, and Comptroller primary elections, if no candidate earns more than 40% of the vote, a runoff election is held between the top two vote-getters to determine the winner

## Why Should You Care?

- When there are multiple candidates in the mix, the candidate who wins isn't necessarily the top choice of the majority of voters. For example, if there are six candidates running for one City Council seat, the top vote-getter might only win with 20% of the vote.
- Runoff elections are expensive! When a separate runoff election is held, it means more taxpayer money is spent on an election that will likely have low voter turnout

## What Experts and Advocates are Proposing

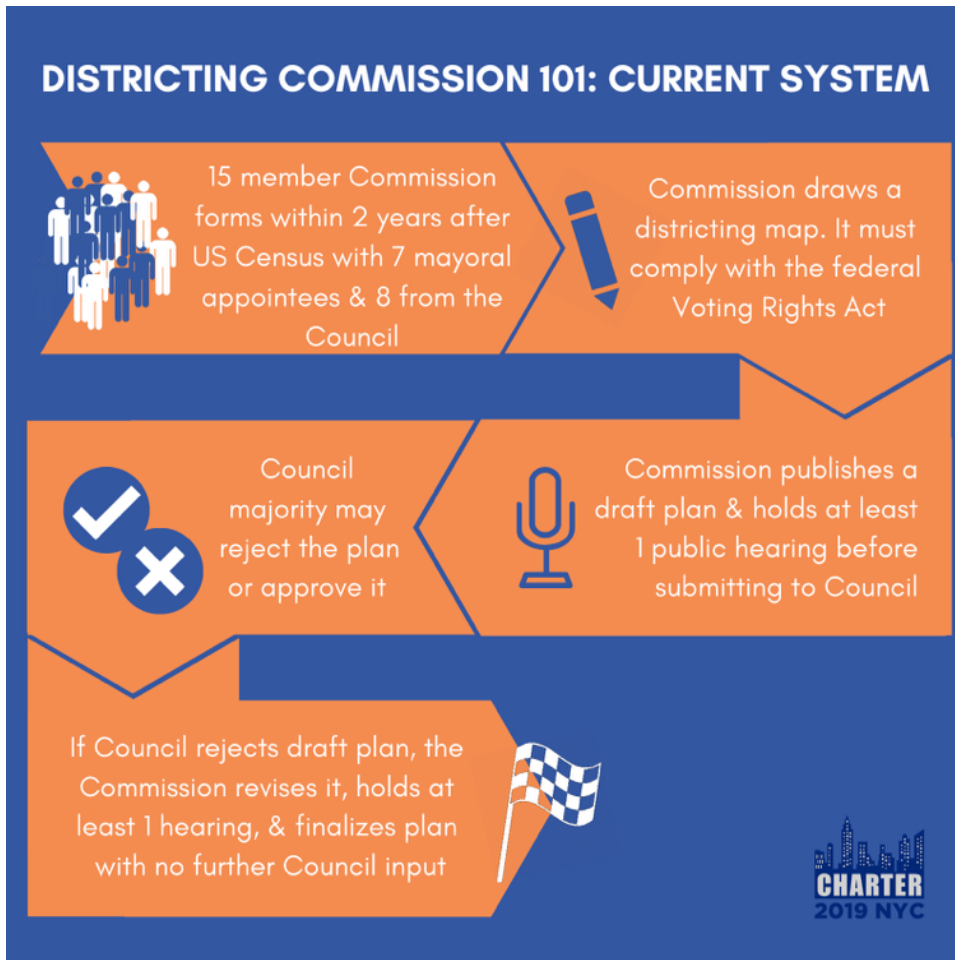
- Ranked Choice Voting (RCV), a system where instead of choosing one candidate, voters rank candidates. Here's how one version of how it works:



- RCV saves taxpayer money and makes elections more fair because:
  - It gets rid of the need for a separate runoff election
  - the most-agreed upon candidate wins

## 2. REDISTRICTING

### How It Is Now







### Why Should You Care?

- Making sure district lines are drawn fairly is no joke. As the Brennan Center put it, redistricting can “influence who wins elections, how political power is distributed, which communities are represented, and what laws are passed.” Specifically, when it comes to New York’s current system:
  - Some see a conflict of interest for the mayor and council members to appoint Commission members
  - The timeline isn’t efficient. Districting Commissions are established two years after the federal census, but City Council candidates often begin their campaigns sooner

## What Experts and Advocates are Proposing

### DISTRICTING COMMISSION 101: PROPOSALS

COMPOSITION	TIMELINE	CRITERIA
 <p>15 member Commission appointed by either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3rd party</li><li>• Various City officials</li><li>• Public application system</li></ul>	 <p>Districts are drawn before most candidates begin campaigning</p> <p>This gives officials more time to campaign after new districts are drawn</p>	 <p>Maintain the criteria for creating fair &amp; effective representation for racial &amp; language minority groups</p>



- Adjust the way Commission members are appointed, including:
  - The Comptroller, Public Advocate, and/or Borough Presidents appoint members
  - A third party like the (Campaign Finance Board) choose members
  - Create a public application system and selecting members by lottery
- Change the timeline so that districts are drawn before most candidates begin campaigning

## 3. CAMPAIGN FINANCE

### CAMPAIGN FINANCE 101

#### How does it work?



The Campaign Finance Board (CFB) oversees a system for public funding of elections.

The CFB has 5 members, with 3 appointed by the Mayor and 2 by the Speaker.

#### Why should you care?



The CFB's small-dollar public matching funds program can help reduce the role of special interests in our elections & make it more fair for first-time candidates.

#### What's been proposed?



Some advocates propose that the Charter modify the appointment structure, like who appoints the Chair (it's currently the Mayor) & explore alternative public financing programs.



#### How It Is Now

- NYC has a public matching funds program in place that works to limit the influence of private money in politics.
  - With NYC's existing public matching funds program, participating candidates can be matched up to the 1st \$250 (for citywide races) or \$175 (for borough presidents/city council races) raised from each donor. In return, candidates abide by a spending limit and receive a post-election audit. Ideally, this encourages small-dollar donations and limits the influence of private money in local politics.
- This program is overseen by the 5-member Campaign Finance Board (CFB), made up of:
  - 2 members appointed by the Mayor, 2 members appointed by the City Council Speaker, and a Chair appointed by the Mayor in consultation with the Speaker

#### Why Should You Care?

- The Mayor and Council Speaker appointing board members can pose a potential conflict of interest
- Some say there's still more that can be done to reduce the role of special interests and PACs, encourage small dollar contributions, and make the system more fair for first-time candidates

#### What Experts and Advocates are Proposing

- Change the way members are appointed to the Campaign Finance Board, including:
  - Modifying who appoints the chair and/or requiring advice and consent from the Council for the two Mayoral selections
  - Granting other elected officials appointment, advice and consent, or consultation regarding appointments
- Explore alternative public financing programs, such as the Democracy Voucher program in Seattle, which give voters publicly funded vouchers they can donate to local candidates