

SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE*

Department:	Dept. Contact/Phone:	CBO Contact/Phone:
Legislative	Lish Whitson/206-615-1674	N/A

1. BILL SUMMARY

Legislation Title:

AN ORDINANCE relating to ranked choice voting; requesting that a special election be held concurrent with the November 8, 2022 general election for submission to the qualified electors of the City of a proposition to institute ranked choice voting for primary elections for City of Seattle elected offices; adding a new Chapter 2.18 to the Seattle Municipal Code; proposing a ballot title; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.

Summary and Background of the Legislation:

This ordinance would place on the ballot Ranked Choice Voting for primaries in the City of Seattle as an alternative Initiative 134, which would implement approval voting.

Ranked choice voting allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference. Counting of ballots would occur in rounds. In each round, voters' top choice would be counted. After each round, the lowest-ranked candidate would be eliminated, and their voters' next ranked choices would be counted. Counting would stop once the top two primary candidates have been chosen.

In order to provide sufficient time to implement this voting system, the legislation would go into effect as soon as practicable and no later than 2027.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project? ☐ Yes ☒ No

3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Does this legislation amend the Adopted Budget? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Does the legislation have other financial impacts to The City of Seattle that are not reflected in the above, including direct or indirect, short-term or long-term costs?

The legislation may increase the costs of elections while King County Elections updates their tabulation system. Implementation of ranked choice voting and approval voting would each require additional outreach and education to voters. Ranked Choice Voting ballots may need to be longer than current ballots, increasing paper costs. King County Elections estimates that these increased costs could be in the range of \$2 million to \$4 million. The City of Seattle would be required to pay some if not all of these costs.

Are there financial costs or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation?

No

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

a. Does this legislation affect any departments besides the originating department?

The City Clerk and Seattle Ethics and Elections would have roles in placing this measure on the ballot.

b. Is a public hearing required for this legislation?

No, however, public comment is required.

c. Is publication of notice with *The Daily Journal of Commerce* and/or *The Seattle Times* required for this legislation?

No

d. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

No

e. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative. Does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? What is the Language Access plan for any communications to the public?

Experience in other jurisdictions indicates that in the first year of implementation of ranked choice voting, extra voter education is required. King County Elections would lead this outreach and implement a language access plan.

f. Climate Change Implications

1. Emissions: Is this legislation likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way?

No

2. Resiliency: Will the action(s) proposed by this legislation increase or decrease Seattle's resiliency (or ability to adapt) to climate change in a material way? If so, explain. If it is likely to decrease resiliency in a material way, describe what will or could be done to mitigate the effects.

No

g. If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program's desired goal(s)?

Ranked-choice voting allows voters to indicate their order of preference for the candidates running in each race and is intended to allow for the election of candidates with the greatest

support from voters, better reflecting the voters' will. This would be measured in voters' satisfaction in the officials elected.