



Office of the City Clerk - Election Division

Description of Different Election Methods

TOWN HALL VOTING

A method whereby a selection or an election occurs in a town hall meeting style. Voting can be through a selection by a “show of hands” or a signed ballot, or by an election through a secret ballot. Both processes can occur at a regularly scheduled meeting or during a pre-set date, time and location.

This election method is also referred to as “same day election”.

<i>Potential Advantages</i>	<i>Potential Disadvantages</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassroots driven and stakeholders may speak • “Meet and greet” candidates • Candidate debates • Potential increased turnout • Increased media exposure • Easy tally process • Customization of election • Cost effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language challenges • Potential for public confrontations • Potential for stakeholder intimidation and disenfranchisement • Length of process unknown • Potential lower turnout due to time constraints • Potential increase in election challenges • Probably unsuitable for large turnout elections • If process is interrupted, what happens next?

INDEPENDENT ELECTION ADMINISTRATORS (IEAs)

Elections conducted by an IEA (with City oversight), consists of contracting with an independent consultant who possess election experience and is tasked with overseeing the election processes and ensuring that the Neighborhood Councils (NC) is meeting the benchmarks set forth in the election timeline.

<i>Potential Advantages</i>	<i>Potential Disadvantages</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More NC control • Less bureaucracy • Election schedule flexibility • More NC stakeholder participation • Opportunity for regional collaboration • Lower cost for elections due to increase in stakeholder volunteerism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language challenges • Requires City staff costs to supervise IEAs • More NC time and resources required • Postponement/cancellation challenges • Potential perceived bias by stakeholders

VOTE-BY-MAIL (VBM) VOTING

VBM refers to ballots delivered by U.S. Mail to voters, and the return of a secure and secret ballot by mail to election officials. The addition of a Neighborhood Voting Centers (NVC) is an added option that would allow voters to drop off their ballots or cast a ballot in person. In such instances, a person would have to vote provisionally so an election administrator can verify that the person had not already voted by mail.

<i>Potential Advantages</i>	<i>Potential Disadvantages</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased language accessibility• Increased voter turnout due to convenience• Vote in private• No electioneering• No wait time• Weather conditions are not an issue• Extended voting time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher printing and postage costs• No or minimal pollworker assistance• Potential for mailing errors• Privacy concerns (i.e., signatures on return envelopes)• Possible ballot errors• Reliance on the post office

INTERNET AND TELEPHONE VOTING

Internet Voting is an election method whereby a voter uses a computer not under the physical control of an election administrator to cast a ballot via a secure internet connection. Telephone Voting is an election method whereby a voter uses a telephone to cast a ballot via an automated voting system. NVCs may be established to accommodate voters who do not have reliable access to a computer or telephone so that they may cast a paper ballot in person. In such instances, a person would have to vote provisionally so an election administrator can verify that the person had not already voted online or by phone.

<i>Potential Advantages</i>	<i>Potential Disadvantages</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased language accessibility• Easy to use and convenient• Flexible voting hours and locations• Environmentally sound (less paper waste)• Appealing to new voters• Fewer ballot errors• Avoid conflict at the polls on Election Day• Development of accurate stakeholder database	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher start-up costs• Concerns over compromised security• Potential negative impacts on minorities and the elderly• Potential for voter confusion• Precedent setting; unknown impact on voter turnout