Elected in 2013 special election. First Hmong American elected to the Council.

Thao ran as a transformative leader, worked with his opponents rather than attacking them, and connected with and addressed the needs of a diverse set of voters.

"I want to thank all of my supporters for their trust in me and our bold vision," Thao stated in a press release. "And for those who didn’t make me their first choice vote, I will work just as hard for you."

He thanked his opponents "for a spirited and positive campaign," and said that he “benefitted from their perspectives on the campaign trail.” Thao later hired one of his opponents as an aide after the election.

Minneapolis (MN)

In 2013 elected its first Hmong, Somali, and Latina city councilors.

Oakland (CA)

People of color make up 5 of 8 city councilors and 6 of 7 elected school board members.

San Francisco (CA)

Of 18 offices elected with RCV, 16 won by people of color—up from 9 when it first started using RCV in 2004.

Cambridge (MA)

African American population under 15%, yet decades-long representation on Council.

Mazen, small business educator and former Occupy Boston spokesperson, embraced a grassroots organizing strategy that helped win a 2013 multi-winner RCV election, in which more people got to elect their top choice. His “Clean Slate” group ran as a team and helped defeat two incumbents. Simulating a non-RCV, winner-take-all ballot shows that Mazen and the council’s first-ever Latino member needed RCV to win.

“By organizing the Clean Slate and clearly stating our principles,” Mazen stated, “we have proven not only that we can work together as leaders, but that we stand for an exciting return to community organizing and community participation.”

Ranked Choice Voting & Under-Represented Communities

RCV & Communities of Color

Minneapolis (MN)

- In 2013 elected its first Hmong, Somali, and Latina city councilors.

Oakland (CA)

- People of color make up 5 of 8 city councilors and 6 of 7 elected school board members.

San Francisco (CA)

- Of 18 offices elected with RCV, 16 won by people of color—up from 9 when it first started using RCV in 2004.

Cambridge (MA)

- African American population under 15%, yet decades-long representation on Council

Produced by FairVote, www.fairvote.org, April 2015
**RCV & Turnout**

**Ranked Choice Voting:**
- Ensures that **decisive elections** occur when the **most** voters are at the polls
- Rewards candidates who reach out to **more** voters

Cities with two-round election systems typically see much lower turnout in the initial primary or the post-election runoff. This makes for a **significantly smaller** and **unrepresentative** group of voters playing a pivotal role in who wins.

---

**RCV & Representation**

In non-RCV elections, potential candidates can be discouraged from seeking office due to high campaign costs or splitting the vote.

**Ranked Choice Voting:**
- Reduces concerns about “spoilers”
- Allows candidates to win in **one** election
- Creates a campaign atmosphere that accommodates **more voices**

In RCV cities, more candidates who identify with historically under-represented communities, such as **women** and **people of color**, are running and winning.

---

**RCV & Inclusive Campaigns**

**Ranked Choice Voting:**
- Creates incentives for candidates to reach out to voters **beyond** their base of support
- Allows for **new voices** to enter the political arena and win in **one election, not two**

For historically marginalized communities, RCV means that candidates are more likely to reach out to them. **Less polarizing** and **less expensive** campaigns increase opportunities for members of such communities to run, which increases participation, engagement, and reflective representation.

---

**RCV & Women**

**Minneapolis (MN)**
- Under RCV Minneapolis elected its second female Mayor, Betsy Hodges.
- Its 13-member City Council has 6 women.

**Oakland (CA)**
- The city’s only two female mayors won since RCV was first used in 2010.
- In addition to new mayor Libby Schaaf, 4 of 8 city councilors are women, and 6 of 7 elected school board members, the City Attorney, and the City Auditor.

**San Leandro (CA)**
- New female mayor elected in 2014. Of its 6 other offices elected by RCV, 3 councilors are women, and 2 are men of color.