

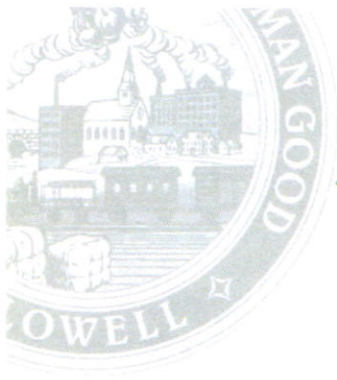
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

CITY OF LOWELL

In City Council

VOTE

The following electoral system has been selected by the Lowell City Council to be used in all future Municipal Elections for both the Lowell City Council and the Lowell School Committee.



City of Lowell - Law Department

375 Merrimack Street, 3rd Floor • Lowell MA 01852-5909
Tel: 978.674.4050 • Fax: 978.453.1510 • www.lowellma.gov

Christine P. O'Connor
City Solicitor

Rachel M. Brown
1st Assistant City Solicitor

Gary D. Gordon
John Richard Hucksam, Jr.
Adam LaGrassa
Stacie M. Moeser
Elliott J. Veloso
Assistant City Solicitors

November 15, 2019

Mayor William J. Samaras
and
Members of the Lowell City Council

Dear Mayor Samaras and Members of the City Council:

A consent decree has been entered by the federal court of the District of Massachusetts in the matter of Huot et al. v. City of Lowell et al (Case No. 1:17-cv-10895). The consent decree requires the City of Lowell to change its election system for future municipal elections of the City Council and the School Committee, to be implemented for the 2021 elections. Determination of which election system to adopt is made by the City Council. Pursuant to the consent decree, there are now two election systems from which the council must make its selection. Those two systems are:

- (1) The Ranked Choice Election System (also known as Proportional Representation). Under this option, voters would continue to elect 9 City Councilors and 6 School Committee members, who will all run city-wide and represent the whole city. Voters will, however, rank candidates by order of preference, choosing somebody as their No. 1 choice, somebody as No. 2, etc. Voters may vote for as many people as there are candidates, but always in ranked order. The final count of the votes is based on the ranking.
- (2) The District & At-Large System (also known as “Hybrid”). Under this option, the city would be divided into 8 districts. The City Council would be expanded from 9 to 11 members, and would include 8 district representatives—one from each district—and 3 at-large or city-wide representatives. The School Committee would have representatives from 4 districts, each comprised of two of the city districts, and 2 at-large members. Voters would vote for one district representative for each of the Council and the School Committee, and up to 3 at-large representatives for the Council and up to 2 at-large representatives for the School Committee.

Also pursuant to the consent decree, the above election systems appeared on the November 5, 2019 as non-binding questions. For each system, voters were asked whether they supported the system (“yes”) or whether they did not support the system (“no”). The results of that ballot were as follows:

| System | Votes Cast | YES | NO |
|--|------------|---------------|---------------|
| Ranked Choice Election System | 8714 | 4276 (49.07%) | 4438 (50.93%) |
| District & At-Large Election System | 8718 | 5205 (59.7%) | 3513 (40.30%) |

Under the consent decree:

“The City Council shall give considerable weight to the results of the Ballot Questions in its selection of a final electoral system, according to the schedule set forth below.

As soon as practicable following the November 2019 election, and no later than December 3, 2019, the City Council shall select which one (1) of the Two Finalist Systems will be implemented in advance of the November 2021 elections for the City of Lowell . . .

Accordingly, this matter is brought before you for the following voice vote:

The following electoral system has been selected by the Lowell City Council to be used in future Municipal Elections for the Lowell City Council and the Lowell School Committee.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Law Department or the Elections Department.

Very truly yours,

Christine P. O'Connor,
City Solicitor