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Queen's Park Update

Ranked Choice Voting – London Ontario – What Happened?

The City of London, Ontario was the first Ontario municipality to use Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) to elect its mayor and councillors. How did it work out?

Each voter was able to rank their choices for mayor and councillor first, second and third. Then the candidate receiving the fewest votes would drop out and the second choice of the voters would transfer to the remaining candidates. This would continue until one candidate received the necessary number of votes to have a majority.

In the contest for mayor, it took 14 rounds before Ed Holder was declared elected. It should be noted that Ed Holder received the most votes in the first round, although not a majority, and would have been elected mayor if the First Past The Post (FPTP) system of voting had been used.

In the contest for councillor, there were 14 wards and 14 councillors to be elected. In every case, the candidate with the most votes in the first round was elected. However eight councillors were elected on the first round and one each on the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 8th and 9th round.

Significance of the Result:

In each of the 15 races, the same candidate would have won under FPTP as won by RCV. However, under RCV in each of the 15 races one candidate received the necessary number of votes to have a majority! This is rarely the case in FPTP.

In municipal elections for mayor and councillor where generally there are no political parties involved, it is possible that a Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) system will produce the same overall results as a First Past The Post (FPTP) system of voting.

However, when there are three or more political parties with clearly defined positions such as is the case in provincial and federation elections, it appears that a Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) system could possibly produce different results from a First Past The Post (FPTP) system of voting.

Please e-mail a copy of this Report to anyone that you think might be interested.