

June 6, 2023

Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers:

I write on behalf of the Chula Vista Charter Review Commission. Upon request of various councilmembers, the commission has been examining alternative voting systems, including ranked choice voting. While the commission believes that ranked choice voting is the best of the alternatives, it is not a perfect system.

The primary benefit of ranked choice voting is that the candidate who ultimately wins is likely to be accepted by voters on both sides of the political spectrum. This benefit has been seen in jurisdictions in which ranked choice voting is being used. On the other hand, the time that it takes to compute and, when necessary, re-compute the votes could cause some to not have confidence in the validity of the results.

The most objective negative aspect of ranked choice voting is the cost of implementing a new voting system, including the registrar of voters' cost of modifying the vote counting computers and the much greater cost of educating the public about ranked choice voting and how to complete a ballot. Savings could be eventually realized when use of ranked choice voting results in not needing to have a run-off election for city offices.

The City of San Diego is considering implementing ranked choice voting. As such, implementation costs could be shared, especially if other public entities in the county decided to utilize a ranked choice voting system. In other words, the commission would recommend not implementing a new voting system until San Diego did so, though the commission could provide a recommended charter amendment in the meantime to allow for ranked choice voting subject to that provision being implemented by ordinance.

We look forward to receiving guidance from City Council as to how the commission should proceed with respect to potential adoption of a ranked choice voting system.

Yours very truly,

*Jan Buddingh, Jr.*

Charter Review Commission Vice Chair