

## Comparing Election Systems

Prepared for February 22, 2016 Meeting of the Tucson Charter Review Committee  
Raphael J. Sonenshein, Ph.D.

Assumptions Based on Previous Committee Discussion

Cost is a factor. What savings can be projected to make any of the choices reasonable on a cost basis?  
External factors may influence outcomes: court decisions, ballot measures such as requirement for jungle primary  
Minimal change to the current system would be preferable.  
Goals are governing effectiveness and responsiveness to the community.  
Ways to increase voter participation should be considered.

### Current System

#### *Members*

Mayor + six council members

#### *Elected by:*

Primary by district; runoff citywide  
Partisan elections

#### *Election dates*

Odd numbered years; primary in September; general election in November

#### *Election rules*

Winner take all; single member district

#### *Mayor and council elections*

Mayor runs with 3 council members; in off year other 3 elected

#### *Constituency service*

Council offices in community or perhaps will be in city hall

#### *Salaries*

Mayor(\$3500/month) and council (\$2000/month); Art V, Sects 8,9 (1999)  
Proposed increase defeated by voters November 2015

#### *Staffing costs*

Mayor and council  
For salary and office costs of mayor/council, see D3-D9 2016 Adopted Budget

#### *Voter turnout*

All mail elections (by ordinance)

### All District

#### *Members*

Mayor + six council members

#### *Elected by:*

Mayor elected citywide; council elected by district  
Partisan vs. nonpartisan TBD

#### *Election dates*

TBD: same calendar or even numbered years

#### *Election rules*

Retain current system

#### *Mayor and council elections*

Same, or elect mayor in offyear, all council every four years

#### *Constituency service*

Constituency service offices or council offices?

#### *Salaries*

Mayor and council

#### *Staffing costs*

Mayor and council

#### *Voter turnout*

All mail elections?

### Hybrid: District + At Large

#### *Members*

Mayor + 8 councilmembers (2 at large)

#### *Elected by:*

Mayor and at large councilmembers elected at large; council by district  
Partisan vs. nonpartisan TBD

#### *Election dates*

TBD: same calendar or even numbered years

#### *Election rules*

Current system with at large elected same as mayor; or other forms  
example: approval voting, instant runoff

#### *Mayor and council elections*

Same, or elect mayor and at large in different years

#### *Constituency service*

Constituency service offices or council offices?

#### *Salaries*

Mayor and council

#### *Staffing costs*

Mayor and council

#### *Voter turnout*

All mail elections?

Change elections to even numbered years?

*Campaign finance*

Dollar for dollar for qualifying candidates; Art 16, Sect 5a

*Cost of elections*

City runs 3-4 citywide and district elections every two years

Even numbered years?

*Campaign finance*

Might be less expensive, except on some circumstances

*Cost of elections*

TBD

Even numbered years?

*Campaign finance*

Less expensive with district, more expensive with at large

*Cost of elections*

TBD

**Selected Research**

*Campaign costs in at large and district systems*

<https://www.uwb.edu/getattachment/policystudies/why-policy-studies/student-work/malinowski-capstone.pdf>

*Governing costs in district systems*

[https://localgov.fsu.edu/readings\\_papers/form%20of%20govt/MacDonald&Sass\\_CouncilSize%20FOG%20elections%20and%20expenditures.pdf](https://localgov.fsu.edu/readings_papers/form%20of%20govt/MacDonald&Sass_CouncilSize%20FOG%20elections%20and%20expenditures.pdf)

<http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/assets/2011/02/02/citycouncilphiladelphiamajorcitiespdf.pdf>

*Alternative voting methods*

<http://bcn.boulder.co.us/government/approvalvote/altvote.html>

[https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/polit/damy/BeginnningReading/why\\_are\\_voting\\_systems\\_important.htm](https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/polit/damy/BeginnningReading/why_are_voting_systems_important.htm)

<http://tech.mit.edu/V123/N8/8voting.8n.html>

[http://pj.freefaculty.org/Ukraine/PJ3\\_VotingSystemsEssay.pdf](http://pj.freefaculty.org/Ukraine/PJ3_VotingSystemsEssay.pdf)