

**Electing a Diverse-City: Improving visible-minority
representation in local governments in Metro
Vancouver**

**by
Munir-Khalid Dossa**

B.A. (Policy Studies), Kwantlen Polytechnic University, 2019

Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Public Policy

in the
School of Public Policy
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Spring 2021

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Name: **Munir-Khalid Dossa**

Degree: **Master of Public Policy**

Thesis title: **Electing a Diverse-City: Improving visible-minority representation in local governments in Metro Vancouver**

Committee: **Chair: Dominique Gross**
Professor, Public Policy

Josh Gordon
Supervisor
Assistant Professor, Public Policy

John Richards
Examiner
Professor, Public Policy

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Abstract

Visible minorities make up roughly half of the population in Metro Vancouver. Despite this, their representation in municipal governments is very low, in partial contrast to provincial and federal levels of government, where representation is higher, although still not proportionate. This study documents this underrepresentation at the municipal level, investigates the sources of that underrepresentation and examines policy options to address it. In five case studies, the research looks at the impact of at-large versus ward electoral systems, varying rates of voter turnout, and the influence of incumbency on electoral chances of visible minority candidates. Drawing on these case studies and six subject matter interviews, the study then evaluates four policy options in the Metro Vancouver context: changing to a ward system for elections, education campaigns, civic engagement opportunities and the status quo.

Keywords: Elections; Municipal government; Visible minorities; Metro Vancouver; Canada

Dedication

To my father Aziz, my mother Anjum, and my big brother Zahid. Everything I am, and ever will be is directly because of you.

To young visible minorities you are beyond capable and can do anything you set your mind to. Dream big, and do not limit yourself. Be the leaders that you want to see out in the world.

To current Canadian politicians, hold yourselves to the high standards your office merits.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Josh Gordon. Your guidance, encouragement, support and mentorship have been invaluable, not only over this past year, but since I entered the Public Policy program. Thank you for challenging me and pushing me to be better. Thank you to Dr. Nancy Olewiler for your guidance and encouragement. I would also like to thank my professors from the school of Public Policy for their continued support, and for holding me to high standards.

Thank you to my interviewees for generously volunteering your time and enthusiasm to my research.

To my friends, both inside and outside of the program, thank you for your support, kind words, and your patience whenever I needed to rant. To my friends in the MPP program, you continually pushed me to be better, and for that I thank you. Your work ethic, intelligence, passion has motivated me throughout our time in the program.

Finally, to my family, thank you for everything. You are directly responsible for moulding me into the person I am today. Your love, and support have fueled me to keep going and push myself to new heights. Your teachings, guidance, sacrifice, and work ethic will continue to serve me for the rest of my life. Thank you for instilling in me an unquenchable thirst for knowledge.

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Glossary

At-large Elections	An electoral system where a political representative is elected to serve an entire area rather than one of its subdivisions. In the context of local governments, when a political representative is elected by electors from the entire city rather than from a subdivision.
Descriptive Representation	When the demographic characteristics of the represented are reflected in the representatives.
Elections B.C.	A non-partisan Office of the Legislature that administers provincial general elections, by-elections, recall petitions, initiative petitions, initiative votes, referenda, plebiscites and oversees campaign financing and advertising rules at the local government level in British Columbia.
Incumbent	Current holder of a political office or position.
Local Government	The administrative and legislative body of a municipality, county or district.
Metro Vancouver	A metropolitan area whose major urban centre is the City of Vancouver. Includes the Village of Anmore, Village of Belcarra, Bowen Island Municipality, City of Burnaby, City of Coquitlam, City of Delta, Electoral Area A, City of Langley, Township of Langley, Village of Lions Bay, City of Maple Ridge, City of New Westminster, City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, City of Pitt Meadows, City of Port Coquitlam, City of Port Moody, City of Richmond, City of Surrey, Tsawwassen First Nation, City of Vancouver, District of West Vancouver, and City of White Rock.
Substantive Representation	The extent that representatives enact policies that are responsive to the needs or demands of the represented.
Symbolic Representation	The extent that representatives act as symbols or stand for something to the represented group.
Visible Minority	A person other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.
Wards	An electoral district within a district or municipality.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Ethnic diversity has grown to become a valued piece of the Canadian identity. While early immigration was largely from Europe, the source countries of immigrants have expanded as Canada continues to rely on immigration. The *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the 1988 *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* codified Canada's embrace of ethnic diversity. It is common to see Canadians of different ethnic origins represented in various sectors of life. However, one area where visible minority Canadians have made limited progress is the political sphere. While visible minority representation has progressed steadily at the federal level and in many provincial governments, there remains consistently low levels of visible minority representation at the municipal level.

In the latest series of local government elections across Metro Vancouver in 2018, visible minorities, who account for 48.9% of the total population of the region, made up 0% of the Mayors of municipalities in the region, and only 11% of the elected Councillors (McElroy, 2020). In the more populous and diverse cities in Metro Vancouver, where greater representation of visible minorities would be expected we see underrepresentation.

According to the 2016 Census, 22.3% of the Canadian population were members of a visible minority community, and in the 2019 federal election, a record-setting 50 visible minority candidates were elected as Members of Parliament, representing 14.8% of federal seats, a difference of 7.5 percentage points between the percentage of visible minorities in the total Canadian population. Provincially, in British Columbia (B.C.), 30.3% of the population are visible minorities, while only 18.3% of elected members of the Legislative Assembly are visible minorities, a representation gap of 12 percentage points. While disparities exist federally and provincially, the representation gap widens as the government jurisdiction gets geographically smaller, from federal to provincial, down to local governments. Though previous research in B.C. focuses primarily on Vancouver (Aung, 2020), the representation gaps of visible minorities can be seen consistently throughout municipalities in the Metro Vancouver area. For example, Surrey, Burnaby, and Richmond, whose populations are all over 100,000 and visible minority population share is over 50%, have the largest representation gaps in Metro Vancouver.

The focus on the representativeness of local governments is an area of increasing academic study. Local government issues are increasingly rising in importance in the political discourse, as local governments, especially larger ones, are expanding their policy role by engaging in policy areas with implications for their increasingly diverse populations and playing greater advocacy roles (Bird, 2011). Municipal issues are rising on the political and policy agenda of Canadians, especially due to the population growth in urban centres and growing suburban communities surrounding larger cities. Additionally, shifting demographics of urban and suburban areas, specifically the increase in immigrant populations, is also a driving factor (Bird, 2011). Municipal governments are often considered the gateway to political life, as the barriers to entry as a candidate tend to be lower (Bird, 2011).

There are too few elected visible minorities in local governments across Metro Vancouver. Using case study comparisons of jurisdictions in Canada and the United States and informational interviews with current and previous municipal politicians, the findings of this analysis help inform choice of policy options to increase visible minorities representation in local governments. The advantages and disadvantages of these options are analyzed using a set of criteria and measures. Finally, recommendations are made.

This paper will proceed in the following way: Chapter 2 will examine relevant background issues including the role and structure of local governments in Metro Vancouver, local government election administration, the importance of descriptive representation, and an overview of recent public debates and opinions. Chapter 3 will outline the methodology used for this research. Chapter 4 conducts a case study analysis of Long Beach, California; Calgary, Alberta; Seattle, Washington; Clarksville, Tennessee; and Saint Paul, Minnesota. Chapter 5 details the results of interviews conducted with current and former local government politicians in Metro Vancouver and the case study jurisdictions. Chapter 6 further dives into the themes that emerged from chapter 5 with a review of existing academic and grey literature. Chapter 7 presents the proposed policy options to address the lack of representation of visible minorities in local governments in Metro Vancouver. Chapter 8 lays out the criteria and measures by which the analysis of the proposed policy options will be conducted. Chapter 9 evaluates the policy options according to the criteria. Finally, Chapter 10 concludes with a discussion of research limitations and makes a policy recommendation.

Chapter 2. Background

2.1. Why is Representation Important?

At the heart of democracy is the idea of representative government: citizens elect representatives to act on their behalf in decision-making bodies. However, in many countries that are not ethnically homogenous and have high rates of immigration, a major challenge is ensuring that diverse voices are represented in the decision-making process. Unrepresentative governments are considered to be unjust, lack legitimacy, and reveal a democratic deficit (Childs and Cowley, 2011). In her book, *The Concept of Representation*, Hanna Pitkin examined four different views of political representation: formalistic representation, descriptive representation, symbolic representation, and substantive representation. The literature on high-quality representation tends to focus on the descriptive and substantive representation categories of representation.

Pitkin's first view is formalistic representation; it has two dimensions - authorization and accountability. The authorization view of formalistic representation focuses on the structure and procedures through which one gains power and authority to represent (Kurebwa, 2015). The accountability view of formalistic representation focuses on the ability of the represented to sanction or hold to account their representatives (Kurebwa, 2015).

Pitkin's second view of representation is symbolic representation. Symbolic representation is the extent that representatives act as symbols or stand for something to the represented group (Kurebwa, 2015). What the symbol is does not matter, what is more important is the symbol's ability to evoke feelings of attitudes from the represented group (Kurebwa, 2015).

The third view of representation Pitkin discusses is substantive representation. Substantive representation is achieved when the representative acts in the interests of those they represent, in a way that is responsive to those represented (Cellis, 2012). That is to say, it is when representatives enact policies that are responsive to the needs or demands of the represented.

The final view, on which this research will primarily focus, is descriptive representation. Descriptive representation is the extent to which the representatives look like or resemble the represented (Dovi, 2018). Primarily, descriptive representation focuses on whether or not demographic characteristics of the represented are reflected in the representatives.

When it comes to the representation of minorities, democratic institutions are often faced with a perceived trade-off between substantive and descriptive representation. Is it more important to be concerned with the physical characteristics and ethnic makeup of the elected representatives of one's government? Or should we be more concerned that marginalized people's beliefs are being represented and acted upon through government action? While the two are not mutually exclusive, and substantive representation is something to strive for, this research will evaluate and focus on descriptive representation.

Descriptive representation can have the additional bonus of symbolic representation. Research has shown positive links between descriptive representation and symbolic representation for marginalized and poorly represented communities (Hayes and Hibbing, 2017); the simple act of having an elected representative [who physically resembles members of a poorly represented community] can have a symbolic effect, allowing these communities a greater sense of empowerment (Hayes and Hibbing, 2017). Symbolic representation manifests in the short-term as a higher perception of procedural fairness, deeper satisfaction with decision-making processes, and support for government actors and actions (Hayes and Hibbing, 2017). In the long term, symbolic representation and descriptive representation can evolve into higher levels of trust in the government, greater perceptions of legitimacy, and greater interest and engagement in politics (Hayes and Hibbing, 2017). A study conducted in the United States on the benefits of descriptive and substantive representation found that at higher levels of descriptive representation, even when the policy outcomes (in this case, affirmative action policies that favoured Black constituents) were seen as favourable or not favourable, trust levels and perception of fairness in decision-making process for Black constituents were minimally impacted (Hayes and Hibbing, 2017). Perceived fairness was ranked on a scale of 0 to 1 and when Black decision makers accounted for 25% of the decision-making body, the perceived fairness score of the favourable policy

outcome is 0.59 compared to 0.55 when the outcome is not favourable (Hayes and Hibbing, 2017).

While substantive representation is something that governments should strive for, it does not consistently occur. Prior research conducted highlights that while elected representatives use perceptions of constituent preferences to inform their behaviour, these links are the strongest when issues are either salient, when elections are near, or when representatives view themselves as delegates rather than trustees (Hayes and Hibbing, 2017). This is to say, politicians may only reflect the policy interests of minorities under conditions where doing so is favourable for themselves, such as to garner support for elections, increase their own popularity or when the views of visible minorities do not conflict with the politician's personal preference. However, in cases where descriptive representation overlaps with substantive representation, there are stronger effects. Research conducted in the United States shows that visible minority members of Congress (specifically African American members) are more likely than non-visible minority Congress members to advance legislation and make speeches that attempt to enhance the material and cultural welfare of visible minority Americans. The study showed that being African American, independent of constituency characteristics or re-election maximization strategies, was the biggest driver for African American politicians to advance issues and sponsor bills of interest to their ethnic group (Baker and Cook, 2005). This includes the sponsoring or co-sponsoring of bills and programs that promote African American history or culture, support historically black organizations such as the NAACP, and promote the development of African American economic interests (Baker and Cook, 2005).

2.2. The Extent of the Problem

In Metro Vancouver, no municipality has more than two elected city officials who belong to a visible minority community. 12 out of 21 local governments have no visible minority representation whatsoever. Four of the 21 municipalities have one elected official, while only five out of 21 municipalities have two elected officials who are members of a visible minority community. Specifically, of the 155 City Councillors and Mayors elected throughout Metro Vancouver, only 14, or 9.03% belong to a visible minority community.

Illustrated below, Figure A shows the four smallest municipalities in Metro Vancouver, with populations under 4,000. While they have low levels of visible minority populations (with the exception of Anmore, having 22.17% of their population being visible minorities), there is no representation of visible minorities in their local governments.

Figure A Percentage of Visible Minorities in Small Metro Vancouver Municipalities Compared to the Percentage of Visible Minorities Elected to City Council in 2018

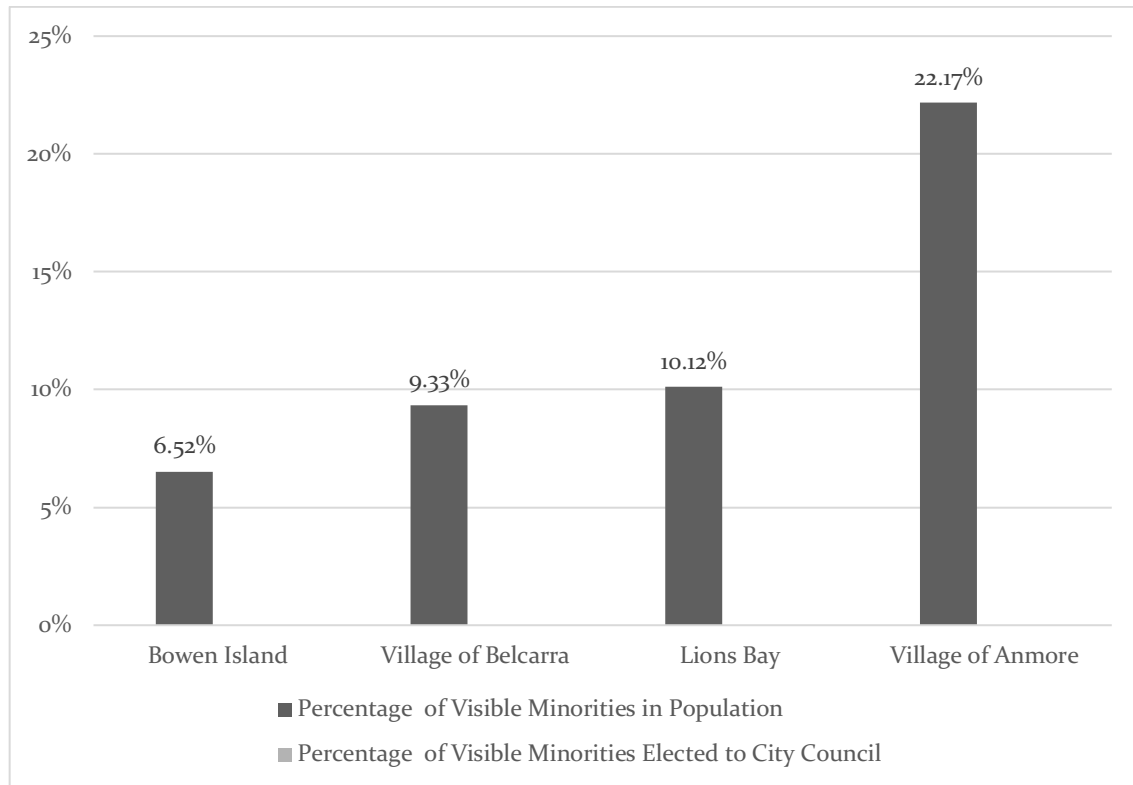
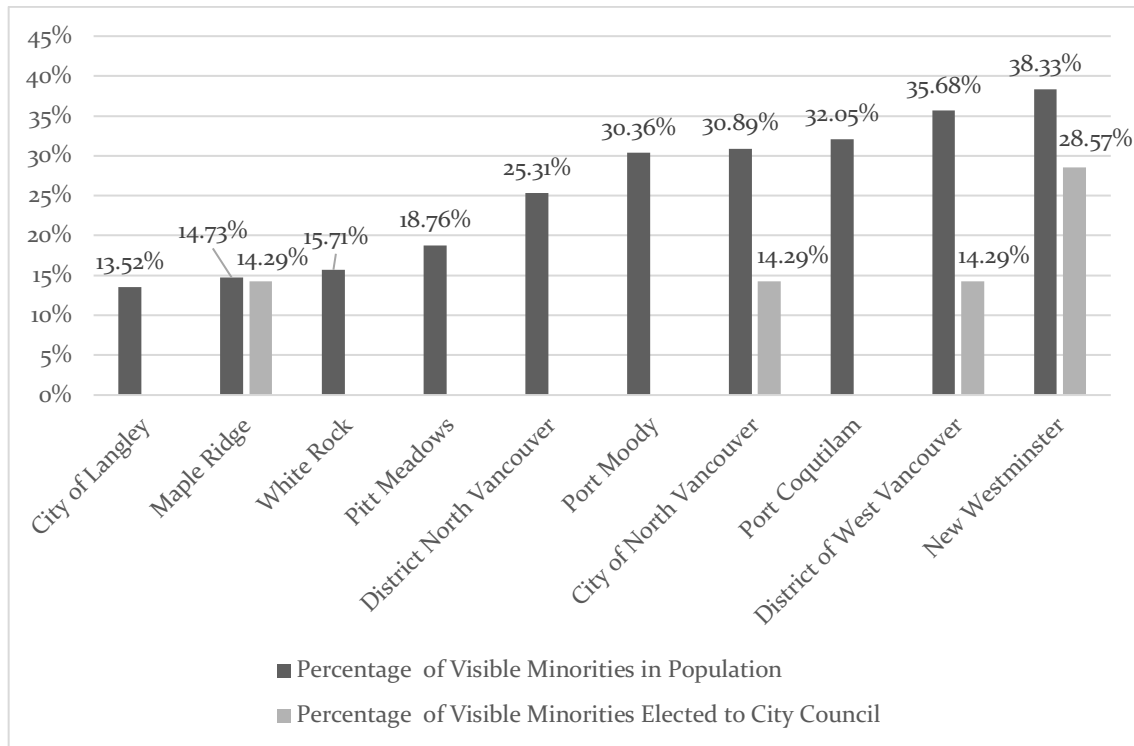


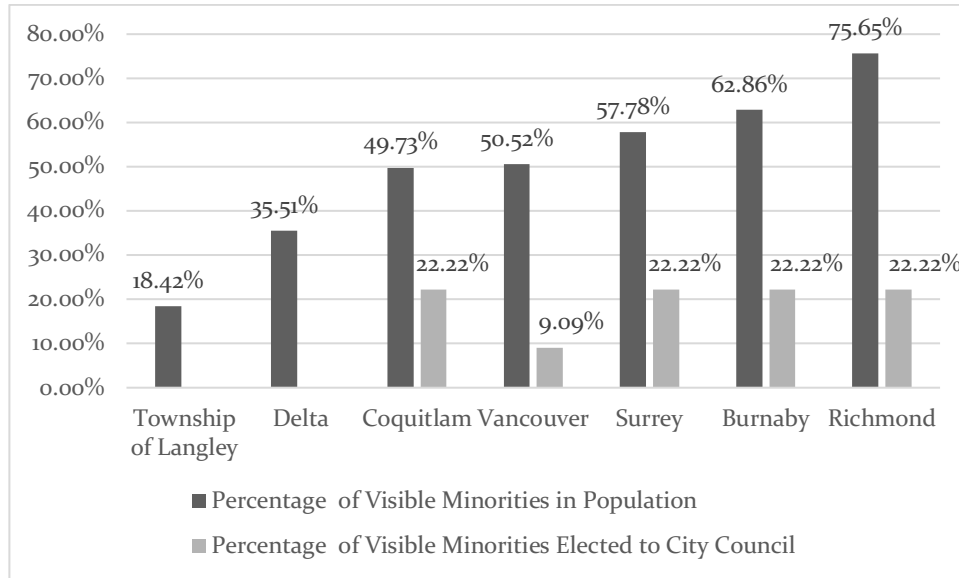
Figure B shows municipalities in Metro Vancouver considered to be medium-sized municipalities, each having populations between 18,000 and 86,000. As the population size increases, there are greater proportions of visible minorities; however, there are still low levels of visible minority representation in local governments. Notable exceptions include Maple Ridge, which has essentially proportionate representation, and New Westminister, whose proportion of visible minority representation differs by 9.76 percentage points. All other cities in Figure B either have no visible minority representation in their local governments, or their representation gap is greater than 15 percentage points.

Figure B Percentage of Visible Minorities in Medium Sized Metro Vancouver Municipalities Compared to the Percentage of Visible Minorities Elected to City Council in 2018



However, the greatest gaps can be seen in Metro Vancouver’s largest cities, which also on average have the greatest portion of visible minorities. Figure C shows the seven most populous cities in Metro Vancouver, all having populations of over 100,000. Of note, throughout all Metro Vancouver municipalities, some of the greatest gaps in representation can be found in the cities where the visible minority population is greater than or equal to 50% of the total population. Particularly this is the case in Richmond, Vancouver, Burnaby, and Surrey, where the percentage point difference ranges from 35.56 to 53.43.

Figure C Percentage of Visible Minorities in Large Metro Vancouver Municipalities Compared to the Percentage of Visible Minorities Elected to City Council in 2018



For a better comparison, Table 1 shows the cities in Metro Vancouver (sorted by total population) and shows the information in Figures A, B, and C, as well as the cities' total population, and the total population of visible minorities in the city. The discrepancy between the number of residents who are members of a visible minority community and the low proportion of visible minorities elected to local government reveals a clear representation problem.

Table 1 Summary of Visible Minority Information in Metro Vancouver Municipalities

City	Total Population (2016)	Total Population of Visible Minorities (2016)	Percentage of Visible Minorities in Population	Percentage of Visible Minorities Elected to City Council
Vancouver	631,486	319,010	50.52%	9.09%
Surrey	517,887	299,245	57.78%	22.22%
Burnaby	232,755	146,310	62.86%	22.22%
Richmond	198,309	150,015	75.65%	22.22%
Coquitlam	139,284	69,270	49.73%	22.22%
Township of Langley	117,285	21,605	18.42%	0.00%
Delta	102,238	36,300	35.51%	0.00%
District of North Vancouver	85,935	21,750	25.31%	0.00%
Maple Ridge	82,256	12,115	14.73%	14.29%
New Westminster	70,996	27,210	38.33%	28.57%
Port Coquitlam	58,612	18,785	32.05%	0.00%
City of North Vancouver	52,898	16,340	30.89%	14.29%
District of West Vancouver	42,473	15,155	35.68%	14.29%
Port Moody	33,551	10,185	30.36%	0.00%
City of Langley	25,888	3,500	13.52%	0.00%
White Rock	19,952	3,135	15.71%	0.00%
Pitt Meadows	18,573	3,485	18.76%	0.00%
Bowen Island	3,680	240	6.52%	0.00%
Village of Anmore	2,210	490	22.17%	0.00%
Lions Bay	1,334	135	10.12%	0.00%
Village of Belcarra	643	60	9.33%	0.00%

*Data taken from Statistics Canada 2016 Census and individual municipality websites

2.3. Possible Explanations as to Why Representation is Low in Municipalities

While there has been much research in Canada on diversity in municipal politics, particularly in Ontario (Bird, 2011; Siemiatycki, 2011), there has been very little research conducted in Metro Vancouver. There is one study that focuses on the representation of

women and visible minorities in Vancouver City Council (Aung, 2020). Aung tests to see if local political party elites discourage visible minorities from obtaining candidacy, if underrepresentation is caused by a lack of “qualified” visible minorities candidates (here “qualified” is defined as candidates who have favourable socioeconomic, and political backgrounds), and if the socioeconomic and political backgrounds of visible minority candidates disadvantage them (Aung, 2020). Results indicate that members of visible minority communities in Vancouver do face barriers to being recruited or active in municipal political parties, including not being a part of traditional recruitment networks nor actively being sought after by local party recruitment officials (Aung, 2020). Aung also found that visible minority candidates in Vancouver had weaker social, and economic backgrounds compared to non-visible minority candidates. They were more likely to have nonprofessional and unskilled occupations compared to white candidates by 12 percentage points, and less likely to reside in affluent neighbourhoods than white candidates by 19 percentage points. Common barriers faced by visible minority candidates include a lack of financial resources, time availability, name recognition, and not belonging to a party’s sociopolitical network (Aung, 2020).

Looking outside of Metro Vancouver for possible explanations, research on 23 local governments across Ontario found that they suffer from underrepresentation of visible minorities, especially when compared to provincial and federal levels of government. In these 23 municipalities, visible minorities, who accounted for 32% of the population, held 7.6% of council seats (Bird, 2011). For comparison, during the same time period, visible minorities accounted for 12.1% of the elected members of the provincial parliament, and 17.1% of the 47 Greater Toronto ridings in federal parliament (Bird, 2011). In the research, Bird concludes that while in certain municipalities, a lack of visible minority candidates played a role in their underrepresentation, there were also other factors at play (Bird, 2011). Bird’s research shows that voter bias through ethnic affinity bias plays a role. Voters prefer same-ethnicity candidates over different-ethnicity candidates, going so far as to prefer a candidate with the same ethnicity over candidates who are likely to work for the broad interests of the entire city and speak for the elector’s interests (Bird, 2011). Bird also explains municipal elections occur in a low information context, with limited media coverage focusing primarily on the front runner candidates (Bird, 2011). Visible minorities candidates suffer in this low information context, especially with the lack of formalized party organizations. Party organizations, which are

typically found at the provincial and federal level, are able to supplement low information by advertising their candidates to electors, and providing other important electoral information and reminders (Bird, 2011). Bird also highlights that local government elections see lower rates of voter turnout with less representative voter bases of a city's population (Bird, 2011). While these issues may arise from research conducted in Ontario, they act as potential explanations for Metro Vancouver as well, with the exception of the lack of party structure, which is prevalent in many Metro Vancouver municipalities, to be discussed later in this chapter.

Research looking into the under-representation of visible minorities in Ontario shows that representation gaps for visible minorities at the local government level can be attributed not only to the lack of political parties but also to time and resource-intensive campaigns at the municipal level (Siemiatycki, 2011). Successful municipal campaigns require candidates to have disposable time and financial support, and the requirements are more burdensome at the municipal level than the provincial or federal level due to the lack of support mechanism for candidates at the local level (Siemiatycki, 2011). Due to these reasons, and the reality that local governments are less understood and appreciated, ambitious visible minority candidates are more likely to seek provincial or federal office (Siemiatycki, 2011).

Researchers have also outlined the conditions under which visible minorities are more likely to succeed in politics. These conditions include electoral contests with smaller electoral districts, electoral contests in districts with concentrated groups of electors with similar demographic characteristics, or electoral contests where they are associated with a political party (Andrew et al., 2008).

2.3.1. Incumbency and Previous Experience Factor

Due to the scale and lack of media coverage on local governments, incumbents and those who have held office at other government levels have a distinct advantage over newer candidates (Bird, 2011). Research from municipalities in California shows that those who currently hold office in local government are more likely to run in the next election, as winning the previous election increased their odds of re-running by 39 percentage points (Trounstine, 2011). The same research shows that incumbents are 32 percentage points more likely to win in a local government election compared to non-

incumbents, and on average increased their share of the vote by 22 percentage points relative to their first electoral victory (Trounstone, 2011). These individuals are known quantities; they have the political capital, name recognition, and receive more media coverage.

Table 2 Select Metro Vancouver Municipalities and Elected Officials with Prior Experience

Municipality	Does the Mayor have prior experience	Percentage of City Councillors with Prior Experience
City of Surrey	Yes	12.50%
City of Vancouver	Yes	50.00%
City of Richmond	Yes	75.00%
City of Burnaby	No	87.50%
City of Coquitlam	Yes	75.00%
City of Delta	No	50.00%
Township of Langley	Yes	75.00%

*Data taken from Civic Info BC, 2018 Candidates and Results

As seen in Table 2, of the seven largest municipalities in Metro Vancouver, five municipalities elected Mayors who had prior governance experience (defined as serving as the incumbent, or having served previously as an elected official at the municipal level, or another level of government). Six of the seven large municipalities elected city councils where at least 50% Councillors had prior governance experience. Table 3 further shows that in all but one large municipality (the City of Surrey), incumbents and candidates with prior governance experience won in larger percentages than non-incumbents and candidates with no governance experience. Appendix A further breaks down the winning percentage of incumbents and candidates with prior governance experience in the council and mayoral elections Metro Vancouver’s seven large municipalities.

Table 3 The Winning Percentage of Incumbents and Candidates with Prior Governance Experience Compared to Candidates with No Governance Experience

City	Number of Candidates with Previous Governance Experience Elected / Number of Candidates with Previous Governance Experience	Number of Candidates without Previous Governance Experience Elected / Number of Candidates without Previous Governance Experience
Surrey	16.67%	16.67%
Vancouver	35.71%	8.77%
Richmond	60%	10%
Burnaby	77.78%	14.29%
Coquitlam	100%	15.38%
Delta	75%	18.75%
Township of Langley	60%	15.38%

*Data taken from Civic Info BC, 2018 Candidates and Results

These tables show that indeed incumbents and candidates with prior governance experience hold a greater electoral advantage in municipal elections as compared to non-incumbent candidates with no governance experience.

2.4. Local Governments

Local governments in B.C. provide services and governance to approximately 89% of the province’s population (Government of British Columbia, n.d.). Councils have the authority to create bylaws, regulate, prohibit, or impose requirements on various areas including land use, fire and policing services, and various other municipal services. There are 162 municipalities in B.C., classified as either towns, villages, districts, or cities depending on their population and geographic area. Local governments are known as creatures of the province, meaning that they are set up and empowered by provincial legislation. In B.C. the two fundamental pieces of provincial legislation that govern local governments are the *Local Government Act* and the *Community Charter*. Notably, the City of Vancouver also has its own *Vancouver Charter*, provincial legislation that makes specific provisions of the *Community Charter* and the *Local Government Act* apply to Vancouver, and makes specific provisions for Vancouver, many of which are parallel powers to other municipalities (Government of British Columbia, n.d.).

2.4.1. Method and Ballots

Elections for City Councillor in Metro Vancouver municipalities are conducted at-large and utilize block voting. Block voting is a variant of first-past-the-post, and acts as a pseudo form of ranked ballot, where each elector is given as many votes as there are positions to be filled. Electors are only able to use one vote per candidate and are free to cast as many or as few of the allotted number of votes as they wish. Under the block system used by municipalities in Metro Vancouver, electors may vote for any candidate, including candidates from different parties or slates. Municipal elections are fixed-date elections and are conducted every four years on the third Saturday of October.

2.4.2. Parties and Slates

Candidates are allowed to run under party banners or form slates in municipal elections across Metro Vancouver. Parties are known as Elector Organizations, and they have a unique set of rules governing their actions at the local level. Elector organizations can be incorporated or unincorporated organizations and may endorse a candidate(s) in an election and have that endorsement included on the ballot. In order to do so, the organization must fill out the appropriate paperwork, including written consent from the candidate. The organization must have a membership of at least 50 electors in the municipality where the election is being held.

Civic Parties and Slates are commonplace in Metro Vancouver. The impact of slates and municipal political parties in five of the seven largest municipalities in Metro Vancouver are observed below for the 2018 elections.

City of Surrey

Of the eight candidates for Mayor, six ran as part of an electoral organization, and the elected Mayor was part of an electoral organization. Of the 48 city council candidates, 36 ran as members of an electoral organization, and all eight elected Councillors were members of an electoral organization. In the 2018 election, there were a total of eight electoral organizations (Safe Surrey Coalition, Surrey First Electors Society, Integrity Now, Proudly Surrey, People First, Progressive Sustainable, Greenvote and Independent Surrey). Of the 42 candidates who ran under a civic party or slate, 20 or 47.62% of the candidates were members of a visible minority community,

with four being mayoral candidates and 16 being Councillor candidates. Of the visible minority candidates who belong to a civic party or slate, 12.5% were elected to city council, compared to 30% of their non-visible minority counterparts.

City of Vancouver

Of the 21 mayoral candidates, six ran as part of an electoral organization, and while the winner did not, he had previously served as a federal Member of Parliament for seven years. Of the 71 City Councillor candidates, 44 ran as part of an electoral organization. All 10 elected City Councillors belonged to electoral organizations. In the 2018 election, there were a total of nine electoral organizations (Green Party of Vancouver, Non-partisan Association (NPA), Coalition of Progressive Electors (COPE), OneCity, Vision Vancouver, Vancouver 1st, Coalition Vancouver, Yes Vancouver and ProVancouver). Of the 50 candidates who ran under a civic party or slate, 25 or 50% of the candidates were members of a visible minority community, with four being mayoral candidates, and 21 being Councillor candidates. Of the candidates who belong to a civic party or slate, 4.76% of the visible minority candidates for Councillors were elected, and 39.13% of non-visible minority candidates were elected as City Councillors.

City of Richmond

Of the six mayoral candidates, none were members of an electoral organization. Of the 30 City Councillor candidates, 19 were members of an electoral organization and seven of the eight elected members of council belonged to an electoral organization. In the 2018 election, there were a total of four electoral organizations (RITE Richmond, Richmond Citizens' Association, Richmond Community Coalition, Richmond First). Of the 19 candidates who ran under a civic party or slate, nine or 47.37% were members of a visible minority community, all seeking Councillor positions. Of the candidates who belong to a civic party or slate, 11.11% of the visible minority candidates for Councillor were elected, whereas 60% of non-visible minority candidates were elected.

City of Burnaby

Of the four mayoral candidates, one was a member of an electoral organization, however, the elected mayor was not. Of the 23 city council candidates, 20 were members of electoral organizations, and all of the elected members of council belonged to an electoral organization. In the 2018 election, there were a total of three electoral

organizations (Burnaby Citizens Association, Burnaby Green Party, and Burnaby First Coalition). Of the 21 candidates who ran under a civic party or slate, eight were members of a visible minority, all seeking the Councillor positions. Of the candidates who belong to a civic party or slate, 25% of the visible minority candidates for Councillor were elected, whereas 50% of the non-visible minority candidates were elected.

City of Delta

Of the six mayoral candidates, three were members of an electoral organization, and the elected Mayor was part of an electoral organization. Of the 20 City Councillor candidates, 14 belonged to an electoral organization, and all six elected Councillors belonged to an electoral organization. In the 2018 election, there were a total of three electoral organizations (Achieving For Delta, Independents Working for You, and Team Delta). Of the 17 candidates who ran under a civic party or slate, three were members of a visible minority community, all of whom were running as Councillors. Of the candidates who belong to a civic party or slate, none of the visible minority candidates were elected as Councillors, while 54.55% of the non-visible minority candidates were elected as Councillors.

As can be seen above, the impacts of civic parties can vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. What is evident is that although visible minority candidates are supported by some electoral organizations, they are not winning at the same rate as their non-visible minority counterparts.

2.4.3. Candidate Eligibility

Table 4 Supply of Visible Minority Candidates in Local Elections of Large Metro Vancouver Municipalities, 2018

City	Total Number of Candidates (Councillor and Mayor Positions)	Total Number of Visible Minority Candidates (Councillor and Mayor Positions)	Percentage of Visible Minority Candidates	Percentage of Visible Minorities in the City	Percentage of Visible Minorities Elected to City Council
Surrey	56	28	50%	57.78%	22.22%
Vancouver	92	36	39.13%	50.52%	9.09%
Richmond	36	17	47.22%	75.65%	22.22%
Burnaby	27	9	33.33%	62.86%	22.22%
Coquitlam	22	4	18.18%	49.73	22.22%
Delta	26	5	19.23%	35.51%	0.00%
Township of Langley	26	2	7.69%	18.42%	0.00%

Table 4 shows the supply of visible minority candidates in the local government elections of the large municipalities in Metro Vancouver in 2018, along with the percentage of visible minorities in the city. As can be seen, the percentage of visible minority candidates in these cities is smaller than their share of the population. After an examination of the candidate eligibility requirements, it can be concluded that there are no formal regulations that act as discriminatory barriers that would limit the participation of potential visible minority candidates. A cursory glance of the limits beyond being an eligible elector and citizen can be found below.

In order to run as a candidate for municipal office, potential candidates must meet certain eligibility requirements. According to the *Local Government Act*, candidates must be nominated by at least two qualified nominators of the municipality, or electoral

area for which the nomination is made, or by the minimum number stipulated by a bylaw, if one exists, in the municipality they intend to run in. According to the *Local Government Act*, municipalities are able to set the bylaws for the minimum number of qualified nominators to either 10 or 25 for a municipality with a population of 5,000 or more, or 10 if the municipality has a population of less than 5,000. For the scope of this research, no municipality in Metro Vancouver has less than 5,000 qualified electors. In order to be qualified as a nominator, an individual must be qualified as an elector of the municipality for which the nomination is made, and in the case of a neighbourhood-specific position, must be qualified as an elector for that position.

Local governments are able to enact bylaws that require a candidate seeking nomination for an elected position to make a nomination deposit; the *Local Government Act* does not allow for bylaws to seek deposits greater than \$100. All deposits are held by the Chief Electoral Officer of the municipality. Deposits are returned to the individual if they are either not successful in being declared a candidate, if they are declared a candidate and successfully fill out the candidate disclosure statement, or if they are declared a candidate and they through a court order are not required to fill out a candidate disclosure statement. In all other cases, the deposit is forfeited and paid to the local government.

Chapter 3. Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology utilized to examine the identified policy problem and help inform policy analysis. The primary methodology used is a case study comparison using an in-depth analysis of municipal government electoral administration, and city council and mayoral composition to better understand why some municipalities have greater representation of visible minorities, and what helps to facilitate this. Further, six expert interviews were conducted with current and former municipal politicians, in order to determine key rationale, barriers and best practices to increase representation in government.

Case studies were conducted in five jurisdictions: Calgary, Alberta; Clarksville, Tennessee; Long Beach, California; Saint Paul, Minnesota; and Seattle, Washington. These jurisdictions were selected as they all have proportionate or close to proportionate representation of visible minorities reflected in their city councils. Case studies will provide background information on the city, such as demographic information, outline the city council history and structure, the breakdown of visible minority representation on council, the jurisdictions' electoral administration, voter turnout, and the impact of incumbency on elections.

For the expert interviews, current and former elected city council officials belonging to visible minority communities in both Metro Vancouver and other major municipalities across North America (including case study cities) were approached to participate. Current City Councillors were approached via their official city council email, while former City Councillors were approached via email in the public domain. Former city council candidates from visible minority communities in Metro Vancouver were also approached to participate in interviews using emails found in the public domain. Due to difficulties in locating contact information for former city council officials and former candidates, as well as time constraints and a lack of responses, only six interviews were conducted. Interviews were semi-structured and covered themes such as barriers visible minorities face entering and seeking election at the local level, the local electoral administration system, if visible minority representation impacts policy at the local level, voter turnout at the local level, the local political knowledge, and engagement.

3.1. Limitations

There are a number of limitations and constraints in this research that need to be addressed. First, there are certain subjects outside of the scope of the research that should be considered for further research. This includes the impact of parties and slates in local government elections, which is briefly touched on in Chapter 2, as well as the role of campaign financing, as it has been established that local government campaigns are financially demanding.

The second limitation is related to the case study jurisdictions. There was a difficulty in finding municipalities that have implemented specific programs in order to increase the elected representation of minority groups. Therefore, case study jurisdictions were selected based on the representation ratio of visible minorities in their local government. The case studies, therefore, act more as community profiles, chronicling and interpreting data instead of policies. This makes the case studies less fruitful than originally anticipated.

The third limitation is in the selection process and the results of the interviews. As mentioned earlier, expert interviews were conducted with visible minority politicians or former candidates at the municipal level. The pool of prospective candidates was taken from Metro Vancouver, as well as the case study jurisdictions. However, there was difficulty in finding the contact information for previously elected politicians, and former candidates. Also, there is an inherent self-selection bias in the sample of interviewees, as those who participated in the interviews are more likely to believe that visible minority representation is important in government. Although it cannot be said that those who did not reply or were unavailable to participate in interviews were not necessarily interested or did not believe in the importance of visible minority representation, we can say that respondents are more likely to be interested and invested in the topic if they agreed to an interview.

Chapter 4. Case Studies

In this chapter, five jurisdictions are examined to determine the impact of the electoral system, voter turnout and incumbency on the representation of visible minorities in local governments. Background information such as a breakdown of demographics of each jurisdiction, historical background of the local government and a breakdown of visible minority representation of the current and previous city councils is done to provide important context to each jurisdiction. A summary of insights gained from the case studies can be found at the end of this chapter.

4.1. Case Study 1 – Calgary

4.1.1. Demographics

Table 5 Demographics: Calgary, Alberta, Canada

	2016 Census	2011 Census
South Asian	115,795	81,180
Chinese	87,835	74,070
Filipino	67,650	47,350
Black	51,515	31,870
Total Visible Minority Population	442,585	325,390
Visible Minority Percentage of Total Population	36.21%	30.07%
Total Populations	1,222,405	1,082,235

*Data Taken From Statistics Canada 2016 and 2011 Census

According to Statistics Canada's 2016 Census, the population of Calgary is 1,222,405. As can be seen in Table 5, the total visible minority population is 442,585, or roughly 36.21% of the total population of Calgary. Table 5 also shows the largest subgroups of visible minorities in Calgary, using the same terms tracked by Statistics Canada. South Asians make up the largest proportion of Calgary's visible minority population, at 115,795, followed by Chinese at 87,835, Filipino at 67,650, and Black at 51,515. In comparison to the 2011 Census, the population of visible minorities has increased from 325,390, as has the population share of visible minorities, from 30.07%,

increasing by 6.14 percentage points. Table 5 also shows that all of the selected subgroup populations of visible minorities have grown as well.

4.1.2. Background on City Council Structure

Currently, Calgary city council consists of 14 Councillors who are in one of the 14 wards and a Mayor who is elected at-large. In 1894 when Calgary became a city, the municipal government consisted of nine aldermen elected from three wards (City of Calgary, n.d.-a). In 1906 a fourth ward was added with three new aldermen positions (City of Calgary, n.d.-a). The ward system was temporarily not used from 1914 to 1960 when the city switched to an at-large election. During that time, aldermen were elected for a two-year term. In 1960 a city plebiscite re-introduced the ward system. The city had six wards with two aldermen from each ward. In 1976 the total amount of wards was increased to 14 and the city had 14 aldermen. In 2013, the term alderman was replaced with Councillors, and their term limit was increased from three years to four.

The City of Calgary is a municipal corporation with a council-manager government structure. The Mayor and Councillors oversee the City Manager and the administration of the city together. Calgary's city council is a council-policy committee system, where the council establishes its policies for governing the city based on information provided by four standing policy committees: planning and urban development, transportation and transit, utilities and corporate services, and community and protective services. The *Municipal Government Act*, city bylaws and the *Calgary Charter* empower and provide the framework for the City of Calgary's municipal government.

4.1.3. Elections

As mentioned above, the Mayor is elected through a citywide vote, while Councillors are elected by the constituents of their wards. Elections, which are regulated by the *Local Authorities Election Act*, are fixed-date, taking place on the third Monday of October every four years. Elections are overseen locally by Elections Calgary. The election is conducted under a first-past-the-post ballot.

The *Municipal Government Act* also lays out the requirement for cities to have wards, and that wards should be kept and adjusted in order to ensure they have an approximately equal number of electors, and that bylaws can enable the adjustment of wards. Even though Councillors are elected from wards, a city bylaw states that they are to act as Councillors for the whole municipality. City Councillors and the Mayor used to serve three-year terms, however, an amendment to Alberta's *Local Authorities Election Act* increased the term length to four years.

4.1.4. Representation Breakdown City and City Council

In terms of visible minority representation on city council, of the 14 wards, three are represented by visible minorities, and Calgary's Mayor is a member of a visible minority community. This is a representation ratio of 26.67% (4 of 15 positions), and when compared to the visible minority share of the population, which as of the 2016 census was 36.2%, there appears to be a small gap. However, Calgary is one of the few Canadian cities with a Mayor who is a visible minority having won three consecutive elections (2010, 2013 and 2017). What is further interesting about Calgary is that since the Mayor's first win in 2010, in each successive election, the number of visible minorities has increased, while in the prior election of 2007, no elected members of city council were visible minorities.

Figure D Percentage of Visible Minorities in Calgary Compared to Percentage of Visible Minorities Elected to Calgary City Council, 2007-2017

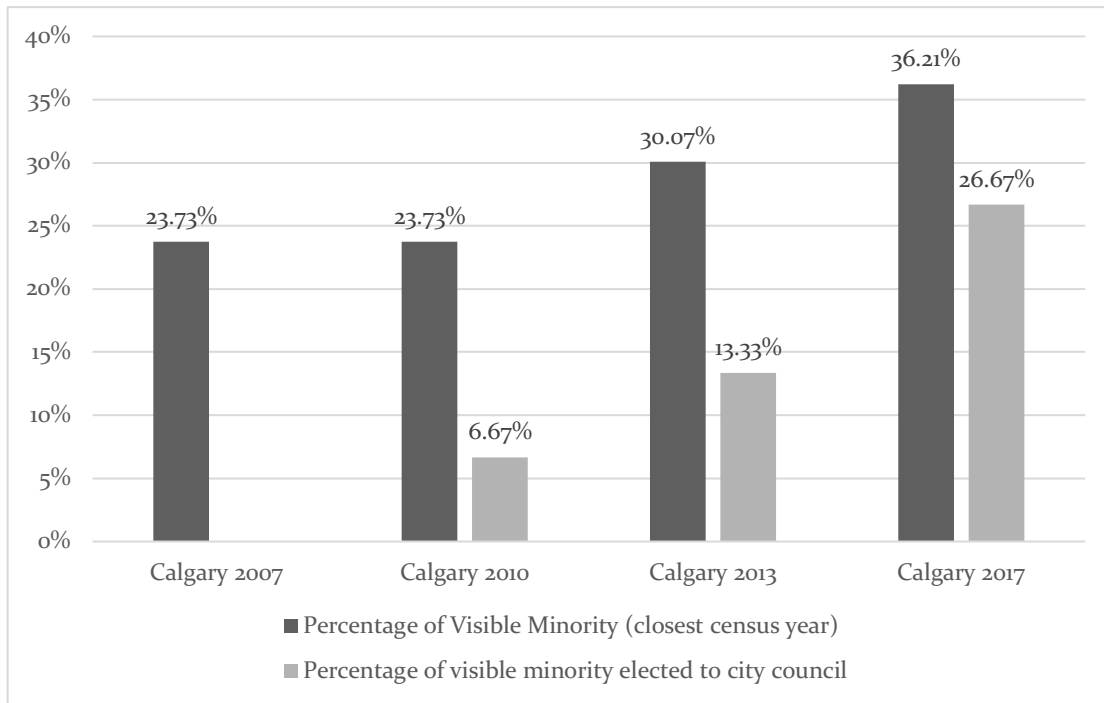


Figure D shows this phenomenon and compares the percentage of visible minorities in Calgary to the percentage of visible minorities elected to Calgary city council. The mayor may have acted as a symbol, encouraging other visible minorities to run. Further, his election may have made the overall electorate more comfortable with electing members of visible minorities, and, as is described in the voter turnout section below, may have increased the participation rates of visible minorities voting.

4.1.5. Voter Turnout

According to Elections Calgary, 387,583 votes were cast in the 2017 municipal election, totalling 58.1% voter turnout (Calgary, n.d.-c). In the 2013 municipal election, 263, 336 votes were cast, approximately 39.4% voter turnout (Calgary, n.d.-b). In the 2010 municipal election, 354,356 votes were cast, approximately 53.3% voter turnout, and in 2007, turnout was 32.9%, with 210,597 votes cast (Calgary, n.d.-b). It is important to note that overall, turnout is higher than typical municipal elections in comparison to Metro Vancouver. In 2017, when the turnout was at its highest in our observed period, city council had the greatest proportion of visible minorities elected.

4.1.6. Incumbency Effect

Table 6 Incumbents Running in Previous Electoral Contests in Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Election Year	Number of Electoral Contests	Number of Incumbents Running	Number of Incumbents Who Won	Percentage of Incumbents Who Won
2017	15	10	10	100%
2013	15	13	11	84.62%
2010	15	9	8	88.89%

In the 2017 election, of the 15 positions up for election, 10 electoral contests saw incumbents run. Of the 10 races where incumbents ran, they won in all of them. In these cases, incumbents won by seven percentage points, 12 percentage points, 13 percentage points, seven percentage points, three percentage points, 25 percentage points, eight percentage points, 61 percentage points, 18 percentage points, and 80 percentage points. On average, incumbents won by a margin of 23.4 percentage points.

In the 2013 election, of the 15 positions up for election, 13 electoral contests saw incumbents run. Of those 13 contests, incumbents won 11, or 84.6% of the contests. In these cases, incumbents won by 53 percentage points, 62 percentage points, 59 percentage points, 14 percentage points, nine percentage points, 22 percentage points, 78 percentage points, six percentage points, 42 percentage points, 26 percentage points and 34 percentage points. The two races the incumbents lost, were lost by a difference of three percentage points, and eight percentage points. On average, incumbents won by a margin of 36.82 percentage points, whereas they lost by an average margin of 5.5 percentage points.

In the 2010 election, of the 15 positions up for election, nine electoral contests saw incumbents run. Of those nine contests, incumbents won eight, or 88.9% of contests. In these cases, incumbents won by 16 percentage points, five percentage points, 40 percentage points, 47 percentage points, five percentage points, 12 percentage points, 68 percentage points, four percentage points, and 24 percentage points. In the race where the incumbent lost, they lost by a margin of 11 percentage points. On average, incumbents won by a margin of 27.63 percentage points.

By observing the trend over the past three elections in Calgary, 32 of the 45 electoral contests, or 71.1%, saw incumbents run. Of those 32 electoral contests, incumbents won 29 contests or 90.6% of those contests. Looking at the 45 electoral contests that occurred over the past three elections, incumbents won 64.4% of the contests. Therefore, it holds true in Calgary that incumbents have a greater chance of winning electoral contests.

4.2. Case Study 2 – Clarksville

4.2.1. Demographics

Table 7 Demographics: Clarksville, Tennessee, USA

	2019 Population Estimates	2010 Census
Non-Hispanic Whites	56.7%	61.1%
“Black or African American Alone”	24.3%	23.2%
“Asian Alone”	2.5%	2.3%
“Hispanic”	11.5%	9.3%
“American Indian and Alaska Native”	0.7%	0.6%
Calculated Visible Minority Percentage	42.6%	38.3%
Total Population	158,146	132,929

*Data Taken From United States Census Bureau

Table 7 shows the latest population estimates from July 1, 2019, and data from the 2010 Census, as collected by the United States Census Bureau. The table compares visible minority percentage and the share of the population of a significant visible minority and non-visible minority sub-groups, as identified by the United States Census Bureau. As the table shows, Clarksville is still predominantly populated by non-Hispanic whites, who account for over 50% of the population. From 2010 to 2019, the visible minority population has increased by 4.3 percentage points and currently accounts for 42.6% of the total population. The largest visible minority subgroup is “Black or African American” accounting for 24.3% of the current population.

4.2.2. Background on City Council Structure

The City of Clarksville was founded in 1785 and incorporated in 1807. In 1907, Clarksville gained legislative approval to adopt a board of commission form of government, who were elected at-large (Buchanan v. City of Jackson, Tenn., 683 F. Supp. 1515). This was done to disenfranchise African American voters, who at the time, accounted for an equal proportion of the population as White voters (United States Department of the Interior National Park Service, n.d.). In 1907, Nace Dixon, a Black Republican city council member actively campaigned to eliminate saloons in the city, which led to a local referendum, where saloons were eliminated, and the City voted to create a new charter (United States Department of the Interior National Park Service, n.d.). The Democratic Party at the time, leading the effort to disenfranchise Black voters, added an amendment to the new city charter eliminating the ward-based voting system in favour of at-large city elections. Democrats alleged the change was necessary for the anti-saloon campaign, but with the covert purpose of eliminating black political power (United States Department of the Interior National Park Service, n.d.).

In 1990, the Clarksville-Montgomery County Citizens for Fair Government, launched a petition to the state Legislature to push for a referendum to change the at-large system to a ward system. The group's petition cited the at-large system as violating the *Voting Rights Act* and diluting the votes of minorities (Scott, 1995). At this point in time, Clarksville's at-large electoral system had wards, however, the candidates were still elected at-large through the entire city, meaning that even if a candidate lost the vote within their ward, if they garnered enough support outside of the ward, they could still be elected (Scott, 1995). The Citizens for Fair Government group also filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against Clarksville and the Montgomery County Election Commission, challenging the at-large system. After a successful referendum in 1991, at-large voting was scrapped for ward voting, and the lawsuit against the city was dropped (Scott, 1995).

Currently, Clarksville City Council elects 12 City Councillors from one of 12 wards, with one Councillor elected per ward and a Mayor elected at-large (State of Tennessee, n.d.). The City Charter specifies that the wards should represent substantially equal populations, and the council may reapportion the districts at any time

if deemed necessary solely for maintaining substantially equal representation based on population, using federal census data as a source (State of Tennessee, n.d.).

Through the City Charter, Clarksville City Council is also empowered to supply, regulate or contract services and licenses, collect and levy taxes, establish and maintain fire services, construct and maintain roads and sidewalks, as well as any power to promote or protect the safety, health, peace, security, good order, comfort, convenience, moral and general welfare of the city and its inhabitants (State of Tennessee, n.d.). The Mayor acts as the chief executive of the municipal government and is responsible for the administration of the City's affairs. The Mayor presides over city council meetings, and has "a seat, a voice and the right to vote". The Mayor is also able to introduce ordinances and resolutions for action by city council. The Mayor also has veto power of city council ordinances. The city council is able to override the mayoral veto by voting to do so with a simple majority.

The City of Clarksville has imposed term limits on City Councillors and Mayors, limiting them to being able to serve a maximum of three consecutive terms (State of Tennessee, n.d.). Should a City Councillor have reached their term limit, should they want to, they are eligible to run for Mayor, whereas Mayors who have reached their term limit are prohibited from running for a City Councillor position (State of Tennessee, n.d.).

4.2.3. Elections

Municipal elections are conducted by the Montgomery County Election Commission. Elections are held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in each even-numbered year in order to fill vacancies or should there be no vacancies, after the conclusion of the Councillor and Mayor's four-year term. Currently, Councillor elections are staggered. The 2020 election saw elections for Wards 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11 and 12, and the 2018 election contested Wards 1, 2, 6, 7, 10, 11 and the at-large Mayor position.

4.2.4. Representation Breakdown City and City Council

In terms of representation on city council, after the 2020 election of Wards 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11 and 12, of the 13 elected positions on city council (Mayor and 12 Councillors),

six are members of a visible minority community, accounting for 50% of the Councillors. After including the Mayor, who is not a member of a visible minority community, visible minorities account for six of 13 elected city council positions or 46.15% of elected city council positions. This has been trending upwards as, after the 2018 elections of the Mayor, Wards 1, 2, 6, 7, 10 and 11, five of 13 members of city council, or 38.46% of council were members of visible minority communities. In 2016, after the election of Wards 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 and 12, four of 13 elected city council positions were held by visible minorities or 30.76% of city council.

Figure E Percentage of Visible Minorities in Clarksville Compared to the Percentage of Visible Minorities Elected to Clarksville City Council, 2016-2020

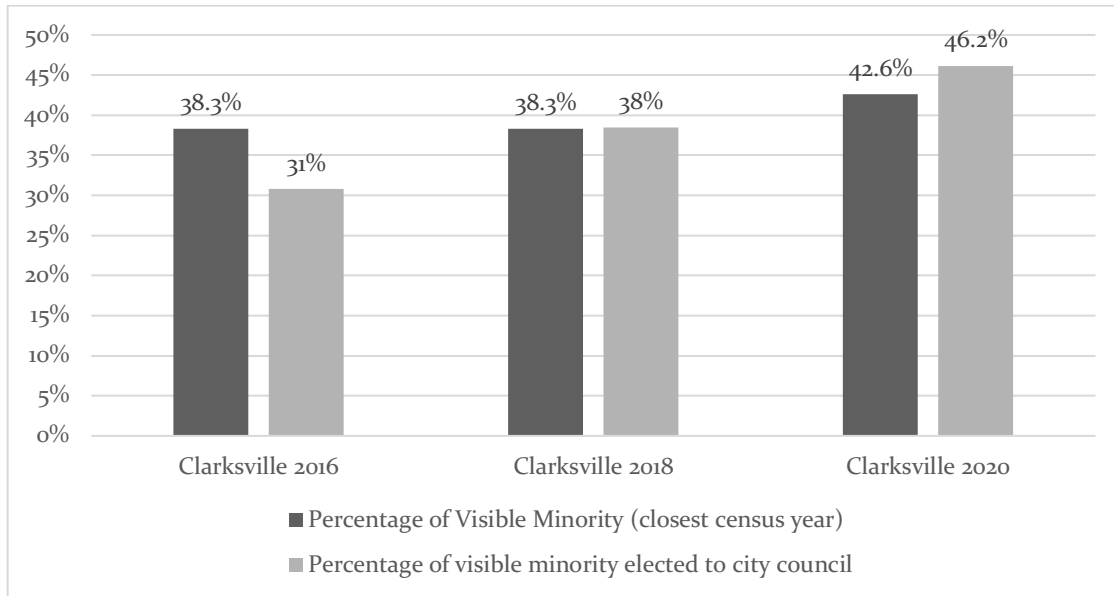


Figure E compares the percentage of visible minorities in Clarksville (using the closest demographic data at the time of the election) to the percentage of visible minorities elected to city council from 2016 to 2020. As the figure shows, after both the 2018 and 2020 elections, the proportion of visible minorities elected to city council was near identical or in the case of 2020, slightly greater, than their corresponding percentage of the total population.

4.2.5. Voter Turnout

The 2020 city election, where seven wards were up for election, ran concurrently with state and the federal presidential election. While there were a total of 131,378 registered voters and turnout overall was 58.64%, only 28,164 ballots were cast for the city council positions, a turnout of 21.43% (Montgomery County Election Commission 2020). The 2018 elections coincided with state elections. There were 109,794 registered voters and voter turnout was 47.77%, however only 14,909 ballots were cast for Councillor positions (13.58% voter turnout), and 33,812 ballots were cast for Mayor (30.79% voter turnout) (Montgomery County Election Commission, 2018). The 2016 city election ran concurrently with the state and federal presidential election. While there were 108,538 registered voters, and voter turnout was 53.70%, only 17,344 ballots were cast for City Councillors, a turnout of approximately 15.98% (Montgomery County Election Commission, 2016).

4.2.6. Incumbency Effect

Table 8 Incumbents Running in Previous Electoral Contests in Clarksville, Tennessee, USA

Election Year	Number of Electoral Contests	Number of Incumbents Running	Number of Incumbents Who Won	Percentage of Incumbents Who Won
2020	7	1	0	0%
2018	7	5	3	60%
2016	6	4	3	75%

In the 2020 city elections of the seven wards up for election, only one race had an incumbent running. That incumbent lost their race to a candidate who had previously served as City Councillor in 2012. In this race, the incumbent placed third, with 16.22 percentage points separating them from the winner. Therefore, while the winner had previous city council experience, it can be observed that 100% of the individuals who won were newly elected individuals, meaning no incumbents were re-elected.

In the 2018 city elections, of the six ward positions and the mayoral position, five races had an incumbent who ran. Of those five races, three saw the incumbent win, and in one of those races, the incumbent ran unopposed. In two cases where the incumbents

lost, they lost by 0.63 percentage points and 21.44 percentage points. In the cases where incumbents won, they won by 15.42 percentage points, 22.17 percentage points, and 97.56 percentage points (this candidate ran unopposed, and the difference in votes was for write-in candidates). Of the seven elected individuals, three or 42.86% were incumbents, and four or 57.14% were newly elected individuals.

In the 2016 city election, of the six ward positions, four races had incumbents who ran. Of those four races, three were won by incumbents. In the race where the incumbent lost, they lost by a 0.76 percentage point difference. In the races where the incumbents won, they won by 34.84 percentage points, 29.84 percentage points, and 95.66 percentage points. The candidate with the largest victory margin ran unopposed, and the difference in votes was for write-in candidates. Therefore, of the six elected City Councillors, three or 50% were incumbents, and three or 50% were newly elected individuals.

By observing the trend over the past three elections in Clarksville, 10 races featured incumbents, and of those 10 races, incumbents won 60% of those races. However, those races only accounted for 50% of the total races in the past three elections. Factoring in all of the electoral contests, incumbents' victories accounted for six of 20 races or 30% of all electoral victories. A factor for the decreased incumbent win rate can be attributed to council term limits and the normalization of new faces in municipal politics. Half of the races in the past three elections did not see any incumbents run.

4.3. Case Study 3 – Long Beach

4.3.1. Demographics

Table 9 Demographics: Long Beach, California, USA

	2019 Population Estimate	Census 2010
Non-Hispanic Whites	28.2%	29.4%
"Black or African American"	12.7%	13.5%
"Asian Alone"	13.1%	12.9%
"Hispanic"	42.6%	40.8%
"American Indian and Alaska Native"	1.1%	0.7%
Calculated Visible Minority Percentage	70.7%	69.9%
Total Population	462,628	462,257

*Data Taken From United States Census Bureau

Table 9 shows the latest population estimates from July 1, 2019 and data from the 2010 Census, as collected by the United States Census Bureau. As the table shows, visible minorities account for the majority of the population of Long Beach, accounting for approximately 70% of the total population in both 2010 and 2019. The largest visible minority subgroup is Hispanic, accounting for over 40% of the population. Non-Hispanic Whites account for under 30% and have been decreasing since 1970 when non-Hispanic Whites accounted for 86.2% of the population.

4.3.2. Background on City Council Structure

Long Beach, California was formed in 1897 and is a charter city (Long Beach, n.d.-a). In 1904 a Board of Freeholders was elected to create a City Charter, which was ratified in 1907 (Long Beach, n.d.-b). Upon the passing of the City Charter, the city council was created, where the city was divided into seven wards, and a Councillor was elected from each of them. At the same time, the first Mayor was elected in 1907 (Long Beach, n.d.-b). In 1921, the charter was amended to mandate a manager-council form of government, and three-year terms were established (Long Beach, n.d.-b). In 1929, voters approved a process where Councillors were elected to represent districts (wards) of the city, however, votes for these district representatives were conducted at-large with the entire city being eligible to vote (Long Beach, n.d.-b). In 1976, terms were increased

to four years, and the charter was amended so that Councillors were elected from wards, and unlike previously, only residents of that ward were eligible to elect the Councillor (Long Beach, n.d.-b).

Long Beach utilizes a Council-Manager System. In a Council-Manager style government, an elected city council serves as the primary legislative body for the municipality. The legislative body has the authority to appoint a Chief Executive Officer, called the City Manager, whose role is to oversee the day-to-day municipal operations, draft a budget, and implement and enforce the city council's policy and legislative initiatives. The city council is made up of nine elected council members and a Mayor. Currently, the City of Long Beach is separated into nine districts, and each of the nine Councillors is elected from and represents a district. While Councillors are elected through wards, the Mayor is elected at-large. The Mayor in Long Beach acts as the Chief Administrative Officer of the legislative department of government and has the power to veto the actions of city council in accordance with Section 213 of the *Charter*. The Mayor presides at city council meetings, where they have no vote but are allowed to participate in the deliberation and proceedings of city council. The Mayor also acts as the ceremonial head of the city government. The City of Long Beach is responsible for its own police and fire departments, as well as water and sewage services, oil and gas, health services, sanitation services, audits and has a city prosecutor.

4.3.3. Elections

The City of Long Beach holds both primary and general (also known as runoff) elections. In a primary election, if a candidate receives a majority of the votes that candidate is elected, however, if no candidate receives over 50% of the votes, the candidates who received the largest share of the votes proceed to a runoff election. The candidate who receives the most votes at the runoff election gets elected to the position. These rules are not applicable to special elections, where no matter how many candidates run, the winner is the one with the largest vote share, regardless of if it is under 50% of total votes. Prior to the 2018 election, Long Beach held a primary election in April and a runoff election in June. However, after an amendment to the city charter, the election dates changed, starting with the 2020 election. The primary nominating election for elected officials is held in even-numbered years on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March and the general election being held in even-numbered years on

the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Elections for odd-number districts and even-number districts are never held during the same general elections, with odd being held one election, and even being held in the next.

4.3.4. Representation Breakdown City and City Council

In terms of representation on city council, currently, of the nine elected City Councillors, six belong to visible minority communities. With the addition of the Mayor, who also belongs to a visible minority community, the total proportion of visible minorities currently elected to city council in Long Beach is seven of the 10, or 70%. These numbers hold for the composition of the council beyond the 2018 election where five positions were contested, and city council beyond the 2016 election, where three positions were contested, with both councils having 70% of their members belong to a visible minority community.

Figure F Percentage of Visible Minorities in Long Beach Compared to the Percentage of Visible Minorities Elected to Long Beach City Council, 2016-2020

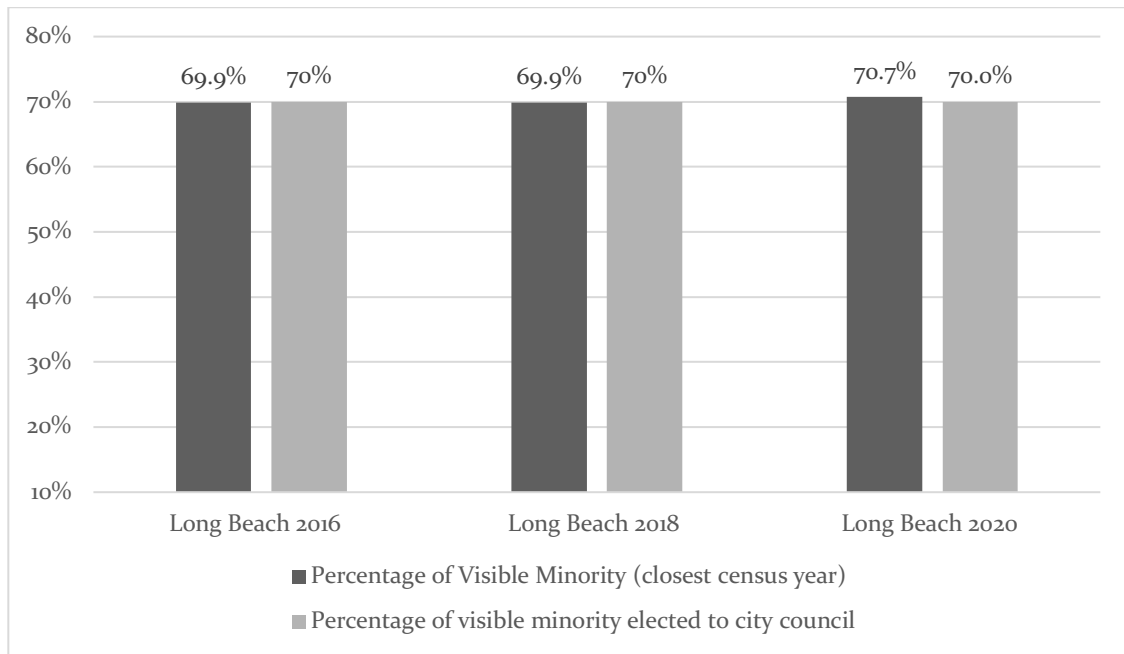


Figure F compares the percentage of visible minorities in Long Beach (using the closest demographic data at the time of the election) to the percentage of visible minorities elected to city council from 2016 to 2020. As can be seen, the percentage of

visible minorities elected to city council has remained consistent over the past three elections, at 70%, and is proportionate to the share of visible minorities in the general population.

4.3.5. Voter Turnout

In the 2020 general election, where three Councillor positions were on the ballot, approximately 69.23% of eligible electors voted (Office of the City Clerk of Long Beach, n.d.). In the 2018 election, where four of the Councillor positions and the Mayoral position were on the ballot, approximately 15.83% of eligible electors voted (Office of the City Clerk of Long Beach, 2018). In the 2016 election, where three Councillor positions were on the ballot, approximately 13.89% of eligible electors voted for city council (Office of the City Clerk of Long Beach, 2016). Voter turnout for the 2020 municipal election seems to be an outlier and can be explained by being held concurrently with the United States presidential election.

4.3.6. Incumbency Effect

Table 10 Incumbents Running in Previous Electoral Contests in Long Beach, California, USA

Election Year	Number of Electoral Contests	Number of Incumbents Running	Number of Incumbents Who Won	Percentage of Incumbents Who Won
2020	3	2	1	50%
2018	5	5	5	100%
2016	3	2	2	100%

In the 2020 election, of the three contested positions, two of the electoral contests had incumbents running. Of those contests, one saw the incumbent win by a margin of 13.54 percentage points, while the other saw the incumbent lose by a margin of 19.58 percentage points (Office of the City Clerk of Long Beach, n.d.).

In the 2018 election, of the five contested positions, all five electoral contests had incumbents running. In each of the five contests, the incumbents won. The incumbents won by margins of 57.56 percentage points, 65.40 percentage points, 10.79 percentage points, 6.19 percentage points, and 59.64 percentage points (Office of the City Clerk of

Long Beach, 2018).). On average, incumbents won by a margin of 39.92 percentage points.

In the 2016 election, of the three contested positions, two electoral contests featured incumbents. In both of the two contests, the incumbents won by margins of 18.46 percentage points and 24.98 percentage points (Office of the City Clerk of Long Beach, 2016). On average, the incumbents won by a margin of 21.72 percentage points.

Through observing these three elections in Long Beach, it can be seen that out of the 11 electoral contests, incumbents ran in nine, or 81.82% of electoral contests over the past three elections. Of those nine contests, the incumbents won eight, or 88.89%. Overall, incumbents were victorious in 72.73% of electoral contests.

4.4. Case Study 4 – Saint Paul

4.4.1. Demographics

Table 11 Demographics: Saint Paul, Minnesota, USA

	2019 Population Estimates	Census 2010
Total Population	308,096	285,068
Calculated Visible Minority Percentage	47.8%	43.0%
Non-Hispanic Whites	51.4%	55.9%
“Black or African American Alone”	16.1%	15.7%
“Asian Alone”	18.7%	15.0%
“Hispanic”	9.2%	9.6%
“American Indian and Alaska Native”	0.8%	1.1%

*Data Taken From United States Census Bureau

Table 11 shows the latest population estimates from July 1, 2019 and data from the 2010 Census, as collected by the United States Census Bureau. The table compares the visible minority percentage and the share of population of significant visible minority and non-visible minority sub-groups, as identified by the United States Census Bureau. As the table shows, visible minorities account for 47.8% of the total population and have increased by 4.8 percentage points since 2010. While non-Hispanic Whites are still the

largest group in Saint Paul, “Asians” and “Black or African American” visible minority populations account for 18.7% and 16.1% respectively.

4.4.2. Background on City Council Structure

The City of Saint Paul was incorporated in 1854. Before 1980, the Saint Paul city council consisted of seven members elected at-large (City of Saint Paul, 2019). In 1980, the Saint Paul City Charter was amended to create seven wards, of which one City Councillor be elected from each (City of Saint Paul, 2019). A lawsuit, *Baker v. Carr* required the wards to each be proportionate to each other (City of Saint Paul, 2019). The city is responsible for policy areas including granting licenses, public works, policing, fire and paramedics, emergency management, parks and recreation, water and utilities, planning and economic development, as well as safety and inspections of the public and buildings. Currently, the city continues to have seven Councillors elected from seven wards and uses a strong mayor-council format for governing. This system sees the Mayor act as Chief Executive and Chief Administrative Officer for the city. Amongst the Mayor’s duties are the control the administration of the city’s affairs, enforcing the city charter, laws and ordinances, appoint the city attorney and heads of executive departments, supervise the administration of all city departments, prepare and recommend to council the city’s budget, approve or veto council ordinances and resolutions, and appoint members to boards, commissions and advisory committees (City of Saint Paul 2021b). The Mayor can attend and participate in council meetings but cannot vote with the exception of specific instances (City of Saint Paul 2021b). Whereas City Councillors are elected from wards, the Mayor is elected at-large. According to the city charter, all legislative power rests in council and City Councillors. Council is responsible for setting the city’s policies through the passing of ordinances and resolutions (City of Saint Paul, 2021a). Council also performs auditing decisions and monitors the operation and performance of city agencies, as well council is responsible for passing the proposed budget for the city (City of Saint Paul, 2021a). Council also performs a quasi-judicial role in hearing appeals regarding actions taken by city agencies (City of Saint Paul, 2021a). Councillors are considered to be part-time roles (City of Saint Paul 2021b). Both the Mayor and City Councillors serve four-year terms.

4.4.3. Elections

Elections for City Councillors occur in wards, while the mayoral election occurs at-large. All city elections in Saint Paul are conducted by Ramsey County. In 2009, Saint Paul changed its ballot system from first-past-the-post to single transferable vote for both city council and mayoral elections. However, since the city council has wards where a single candidate wins, the single transferable vote system functions largely as ranked-choice voting. In Saint Paul's single-transferable vote systems, voters rank candidates in order of preference. In order to be elected candidates must receive at least 50% of the first-choice votes. If no candidate receives 50% of the total votes, the candidates with the least first preferences votes are eliminated, and the second-choice votes on those ballots are tabulated and added to the total of the remaining candidates. This process continues until one candidate wins an outright majority. Elections are fixed-date occurring on the first Tuesday of November on a four-year cycle. Candidates are allowed to use partisan materials in campaigning and are allowed to identify and belong to a state or federal political party, although there are no city parties. Candidates are allowed to form and run under slates.

4.4.4. Representation Breakdown City and City Council

In terms of representation on the city council currently, of the seven City Councillors, three are members of a visible minority community, as is the Mayor, who is Saint Paul's first African American Mayor. In total, four of the eight or 50% elected officials are members of a visible minority community. The 50% represents an increase from previous years. City council after the 2015 election was comprised of only one visible minority Councillor of the seven City Councillors. At the time the Mayor was not a member of a visible minority community. This meant that visible minorities accounted for one of eight elected officials or 12.5% of elected officials. The same is true of Saint Paul city council after the 2011 general election, where only one of the eight elected officials was a member of a visible minority community.

Figure G Percentage of Visible Minorities in Saint Paul Compared to the Percentage of Visible Minorities Elected to Saint Paul City Council, 2011-2019

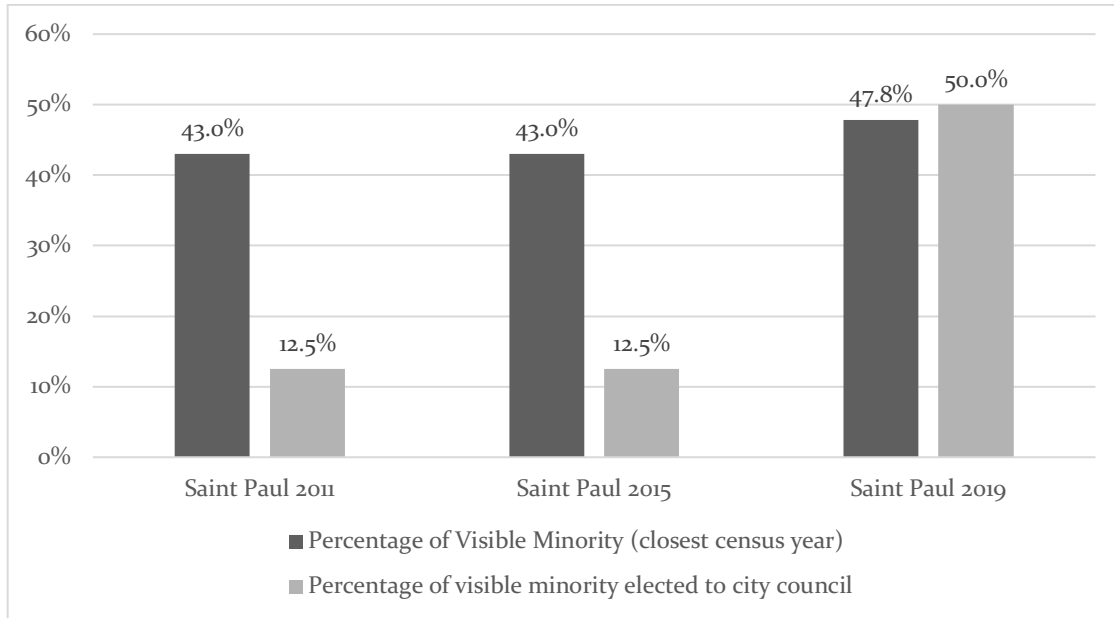


Figure G compares the percentage of visible minorities in Saint Paul (using the closest demographic data at the time of the election) to the percentage of visible minorities elected to city council from 2011 to 2019. The city councils elected after the 2011 and 2015 elections had a visible minority representation gap of approximately 30.5 percentage points. After the 2019 election, the visible minority representation on city council is 2.2 percentage points greater than the share of the total population. The increase in representation between the 2015 council and the 2019 council is 37.5 percentage points or three additional visible minority elected officials. To note, in 2017, the mayoral election was held, and a visible minority was elected to the position. Subsequently, in 2018 a special election was held in Ward 4, where another visible minority was elected.

4.4.5. Voter Turnout

In the 2019 general election where all seven Councillor positions were contested, of the 165,725 registered voters, 54,122 cast their ballots for Councillors, a voter turnout of 32.65% (Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, 2019). In the 2015 general election, where similarly, all seven Councillor positions were contested, of the 150,676

registered voters, only 26,660 ballots were cast for Councillors, a voter turnout of 17.69% (Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, 2015). In the 2011 general election, where all seven Councillor positions were contested, of the 155,247 registered voters, 29,802 ballots were cast for Councillors, a voter turnout of 19.20% (Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, 2011).

Comparing the turnout in Councillor elections to mayoral elections, there is a noticeable difference. In the 2017 mayoral election, of the 156,543 registered voters, 61,646 ballots were cast, a turnout of 39.38% (Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, 2017). In the 2013 mayoral election, of the 154,672 registered voters, 30,518 ballots were cast, a turnout of 19.73% (Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, 2013). In the 2009 mayoral election (which was conducted under the former first-past-the-post system, before the city switched to Single Transferable Vote), of 157,859 registered voters, 34,042 ballots were cast, a turnout of 21.56% (Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, 2009).

Comparing the elections observed, neither the mayoral election nor the city council elections had voter turnout rates above 40%. However, the mayoral election sees higher rates of turnout consistently. The increase in turnout in the 2019 Councillor election can be explained by the city-wide referendum on garbage collection that occurred concurrently. A scan of media sources confirms that this referendum was a highly salient issue for Saint Paul residents at the time (Walsh, 2019; Nelson, 2019; Melo and Rademacher, 2019).

4.4.6. Incumbency Effect

Table 12 Incumbents Running in Previous Electoral Contests in Saint Paul, Minnesota, USA

Election Year	Number of Electoral Contests	Number of Incumbents Running	Number of Incumbents Who Won	Percentage of Incumbents Who Won
2019	7	6	6	100%
2015	7	5	5	100%
2011	7	6	5	83.33%

In the 2019 Councillor election, of the seven positions up for election, six electoral contests had incumbents running. Of those contests, incumbents won in all six. The incumbents won by margins of 6.2 percentage points, 39.6 percentage points, 21.6 percentage points, 32.1 percentage points, 25.9 percentage points and 45.4 percentage points (Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, 2019). Overall, incumbents won by an average margin of 28.5 percentage points, and all except for one were elected in the first round of voting.

In the 2015 Councillor election, of the seven positions up for election, five electoral contests saw incumbents run. Of those contests, incumbents won in all five contests. The incumbents won by margins of 70.2 percentage points, 83.7 percentage points, 23.4 percentage points, 18.3 percentage points, and 60.2 percentage points (Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, 2015). Overall, incumbents won by an average margin of 51.2 percentage points, and all incumbents were elected in the first round of voting.

In the 2011 Councillor election, of the seven positions up for election, six electoral contests had incumbents run. Of those contests, incumbents were victorious in five, or 83.3% of contests. Of the contests where incumbents won, they were elected by margins of 32.5 percentage points, 15 percentage points, 54.3 percentage points, 16.7 percentage points, and 86.4 percentage points (Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, 2011). Overall, incumbents won by an average margin of approximately 41 percentage points, and all winning incumbents except for one were elected in the first round of voting. In the race where the incumbent lost, they lost by a margin of 0.98 percentage points in the first round of voting.

By observing the trend over the past three general elections in Saint Paul, 17 out of 21 electoral contests, or approximately 81% of electoral contests featured incumbents running. Of those 17 contests, incumbents won in 16 or 94.1%. Overall, incumbents won 76.2% of all electoral contests in Councillor general elections in Saint Paul over the past three general election cycles.

4.5. Case Study 5 – Seattle

4.5.1. Demographics

Table 13 Demographics: Seattle, Washington, USA

	2019 Population Estimate	Census 2010
Non-Hispanic Whites	63.8%	66.3%
"Black or African American"	7.3%	7.9%
"Asian Alone"	15.4%	13.8%
"Hispanic"	6.7%	9%
"American Indian and Alaska Native"	0.5%	0.8%
Calculated Visible Minority Percentage	35.7%	32.9%
Total Population	753,675	608,660

*Data Taken From United States Census Bureau

Table 13 shows the latest population estimates from July 1, 2019 and data from the 2010 Census, as collected by the United States Census Bureau. The table compares the visible minority percentage and the share of population of significant visible minority and non-visible minority sub-groups, as identified by the United States Census Bureau. As the table shows, the percentage of visible minorities has increased marginally by 2.8 percentage points, accounting for a little over a third of the total population of Seattle residents. Seattle's population is largely "non-Hispanic White", accounting for approximately two-thirds of the total population. The largest visible minority sub-group is "Asian alone", accounting for 15.4% of the total population.

4.5.2. Background on City Council Structure

Seattle is designated as a first-class Charter city under *RCW 35.01.010* (Office of the Seattle City Clerk, n.d.-h). A first-class city is a city with a population of 10,000 or more at the time of organization or reorganization that has adopted a charter (Municipal Research and Services Centre, 2019). Seattle is also a charter city, and the *Seattle City Charter* defines the city's powers and duties. City council is responsible for approving the city's budget and develops laws and policies related to city and local affairs, including city police, firefighting, parks, libraries, water supply, electricity, waste and utilities. Seattle utilizes a mayor-council form of government. The Mayor is elected at

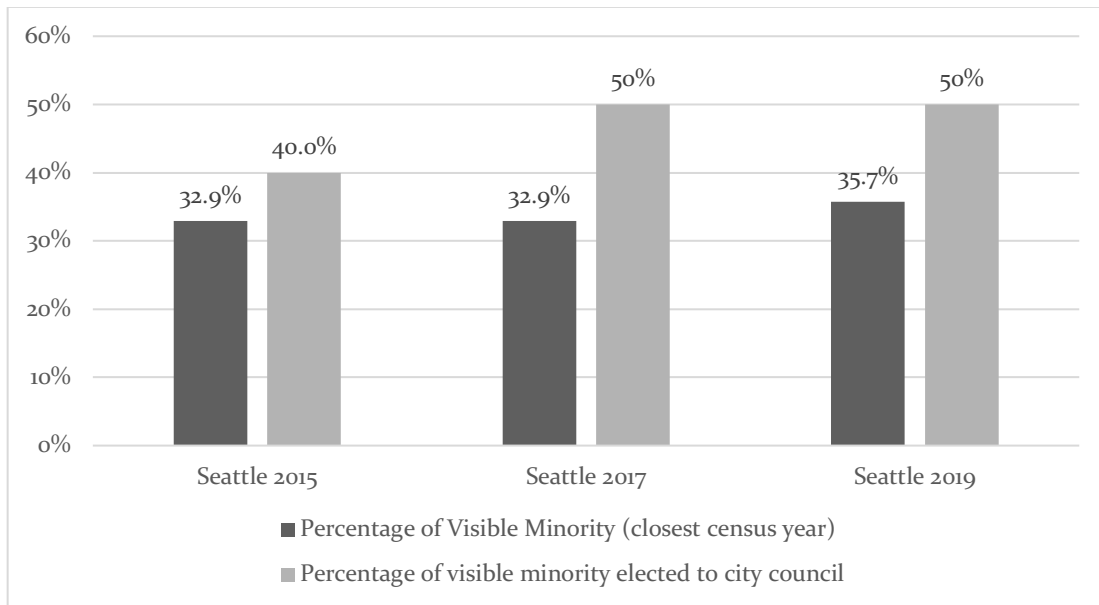
large, while the nine City Councillors are elected. Seven of the Councillors are elected from seven districts and two are elected at-large. The Mayor acts as the city's Chief Executive Officer and is responsible for proposing the budget, signing legislation into law, appointing departmental heads and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the city.

Seattle was first incorporated as a Town by Territorial Legislation in 1865, however, the act was repealed in 1867, after a citizens petition for its dissolution (Office of the Seattle City Clerk, [n.d.-g](#)). Seattle was again incorporated in 1869, however this time, as a city. In 1884 the ward system was introduced in the city, three Councillors were elected from each of the three newly established wards for two-year terms (Office of the Seattle City Clerk, n.d.-f). In 1886, another ward was added, and council was reduced to eight elected members, two from each ward (Office of the Seattle City Clerk, n.d.-f). In 1890, *First Home Rule Charter* was adopted which increased the number of wards to eight and created a bicameral city council, which consisted of a nine-member board of Alderman, each elected at-large for four-year terms, and a house of delegate, where two members were elected from each of the City's eight wards (Office of the Seattle City Clerk, n.d.-e). In 1896, city council was changed to a unicameral body with 13 members (Office of the Seattle City Clerk, n.d.-d). In 1910, the city charter was again amended and the ward system was demolished, changing council to have nine elected at-large members for three-year overlapping terms (In 1911 nine members were elected, three for one-year terms, three for two-year terms, and three for three-year terms); at this time, the charter also made elections non-partisan (Office of the Seattle City Clerk, n.d.-c). In 1946, the charter was amended to make elections be held every two years. Councillor terms were also extended to four years and the President of the Council would serve two years (Office of the Seattle City Clerk, n.d.-b). In 2013, after the submission of a petition by voters, council approved a charter amendment (*Amendment 19*), which divided the city into seven districts, and allowed two Councillors to be elected at-large (Office of the Seattle City Clerk, n.d.-a). At the time of creation, the districts represented similar population totals. The first election testing this new system was conducted in 2015, where the seven district Councillors were elected for a four-year term, while the two at-large Councillors were elected for a two-year term. After 2017, the term length for the two at-large Councillors was increased to four years.

4.5.3. Representation Breakdown City and City Council

In terms of visible minority representation on city council, after the 2019 election where seven of the district seats were up for election, of the nine City Councillor positions, five are members of visible minority communities. Including the position of Mayor, who is not a member of a visible minority community, 50% of the city council are members of a visible minority group. Both of the Councillors who are elected at-large are members of a visible minority community, while three of the seven districts have elected visible minority Councillors. After the prior election in 2017 where the two at-large seats were up for election, five of the 10 city council positions were held by visible minorities. In the 2015 election, where all nine Councillor seats were up for election, four visible minorities were elected to council. Including the non-visible minority Mayor, four of 10, or 40% of city council were visible minorities. Figure H compares the percentage of visible minorities in Seattle (using the closest demographic data at the time of the election) to the percentage of visible minorities elected to city council from 2015 to 2019. There is a trend of overrepresentation of visible minorities in comparison to their share of the population.

Figure H Percentage of Visible Minorities in Seattle Compared to Percentage of Visible Minorities Elected to Seattle City Council, 2015-2019



4.5.4. Elections

Officially elections are non-partisan with no party identification being placed on the ballot (Washington State Legislature, n.d.). Candidates are able to voluntarily self-identify their party identification during the campaign. For the mayoral and Councillor positions, Seattle hosts two elections; a primary election, to identify the top two candidates for a given position, and a general election where the winner of the two selected candidates is elected to the position. City council elections occur in odd-numbered years and the elections for at-large seats are staggered from the district-based positions. For example, in 2019, the seven district council seats were up for election, while in 2017, the mayoral and the two at-large Councillor seats were up for election. Both the primary and at-large elections for all positions are conducted through a first-past-the-post ballot.

4.5.5. Voter Turnout

In the 2019 municipal election, where the seven district Councillors were elected, in the primary election, of the 470,304 registered voters, 197,568 ballots were cast, a turnout of 42.01% (Seattle Ethics & Elections Commission, 2020). In the general election, of the 475,390 registered voters, 258,919 ballots were cast, a turnout of 54.46% (Seattle Ethics & Elections Commission, 2020). In 2017, where the Mayor and the two at-large council seats were elected, in the primary election, of the 463,660 registered voters, 187,741 ballots were cast, a turnout of 40.49% (Seattle Ethics & Elections Commission, 2018). In the general election, of the 456,871 registered voters, 224,808 ballots were cast, a turnout of 49.21% (Seattle Ethics & Elections Commission, 2018). In the 2015 election, where all of the nine city council positions were on the ballot, in the primary election, of the 414,340 registered voters, 126,012 ballots were cast, a turnout of 30.40% (Seattle Ethics & Elections Commission, 2016). In the general election, of the 419,292 registered voters, 191,267 ballots were cast, a turnout of 45.6% (Seattle Ethics & Elections Commission, 2016).

4.5.6. Incumbency Effect

Table 14 Incumbents Running in Previous Electoral Contests in Seattle, Washington, USA

Election Year	Number of Electoral Contests	Number of Incumbents Running	Number of Incumbents Who Won	Percentage of Incumbents Who Won
2019	7	3	3	100%
2017	3	1	1	100%
2015	9	5	5	100%

In the 2019 general elections for City Councillors, of the seven electoral contests, three featured incumbents running. Of those races, the incumbents won all three by margins of 11.7 percentage points, 4.2 percentage points, and 21.6 percentage points (The Seattle Times, 2019). The average margin an incumbent won by was 12.5 percentage points.

In the 2017 general election, of the three electoral contests, one featured an incumbent running. The incumbent won that contest by a margin of 38 percentage points (The Seattle Times, 2017).

In the 2015 general election, of the nine electoral contests, five saw incumbents run. Of those races, incumbents were victorious in all five contests. Incumbents were victorious by margins of 2.4 percentage points, 11.5 percentage points, 22.7 percentage points, 62.5 percentage points, and 10.2 percentage points (The Seattle Times, 2015). The average margin incumbents won by was 21.9 percentage points.

By observing the past three elections in Seattle, it can be observed that every time an incumbent ran in an electoral contest, they won that contest. Incumbent contested electoral contests accounted for nine of the 19 contests, or 47.4% of contests over the past three elections. The incumbency effect is present in Seattle, it seems that incumbents do not run in the same strength as other case study cities, running in less than 50% of electoral contests.

4.6. Insights Gained from Case Studies

There are three key takeaways from the case study analysis:

First, while all case study jurisdictions had wards, they also all had instances where representation was more proportionate than in Metro Vancouver municipalities whose local governments are based on at-large systems. Both municipalities with visible minority populations under 50% of the total population and over 50% of the total population saw higher rates of descriptive representation than in the at-large system in Metro Vancouver. While there are election years where the wards do yield large gaps in representation, the rate at which visible minority candidates get elected compared to the at-large system in Metro Vancouver indicates that it is easier for visible minority candidates to get elected in ward systems than in at-large systems.

Second, in the case study jurisdictions where visible minorities accounted for less than 50% of the total population (Calgary; Clarksville; Saint Paul; Seattle), election years that saw the highest voter turnout, yielded the election of the most representative local governments. This phenomenon indicates that when a larger proportion of the electorate votes, there is a higher likelihood that government that is reflective of the electorate at whole. In Calgary, the highest turnout in the observed elections was 58.1% in the 2017 election (see section 4.1.5), the election that elected the current city council. Currently, visible minorities account for 26.67% of city council, which according to Figure D was the highest rate of the observed city councils. In Clarksville, the highest turnout in the observed elections was 21.43% in the 2020 election (see section 4.2.5). Of the 2020 city council, visible minorities account for 46.2% of the city council, which as seen in Figure E is the highest rate of the observed city councils. In Saint Paul, the turnout in the observed elections was 32.65% in the 2019 general election (see section 4.4.5). Of the 2019 city council, visible minorities accounted for 50% of city council, which as seen in Figure G is the highest rate of the observed city councils. In Seattle, the highest turnout in the observed elections was 54.46% in 2019 (see section 4.5.5). Of the 2019 city council, visible minorities accounted for 50% of city council. As seen in Figure H, this is tied for the highest observed, along with the 2017 council, that also consisted of 50% visible minorities (while the voter turnout was 49.21%).

Finally, just as in Metro Vancouver, candidates who have prior governance experience and name recognition (measured as incumbents) had a distinct advantage in elections. Incumbents were elected at higher rates throughout all of the cases studied, the sole outlier being Clarksville, where there are term limits set on incumbents. In the three observed elections in Calgary, incumbents won an average of 91.17% of their electoral contests (see section 4.1.6). In the three observed elections in Long Beach, incumbents won an average of 83.33% of their electoral contests (see section 4.3.6). In the three observed elections in Saint Paul, incumbents won an average of 94.44% of their electoral contests (see section 4.4.6). In the three observed elections in Seattle, incumbents won an average of 100% of their electoral contests (see section 4.5.6).

Chapter 5. Interviews

Five current local government elected officials and one former mayoral candidate were interviewed on the topic of visible minority representation in local governments (interviewee jurisdictions and roles can be found in Table 15). The interviews utilized a semi-structured interview guide. Specifically, interviewees were asked about their thoughts on the importance of visible minority representation at the local government level, barriers that visible minorities may face to successfully being elected, how electoral systems impact visible minority candidates, and the role of voter turnout on city council diversity. The findings of these interviews can be found below, as well as other key themes that emerged across interviews.

Table 15 List of Interviewees

Interviewee	Jurisdiction	Role
1	Metro Vancouver	Current City Councillor
2	Metro Vancouver	Current City Councillor
3	Metro Vancouver	Former Mayoral Candidate
4	Case Study Municipality	Current City Councillor
5	Case Study Municipality	Current City Councillor
6	Non-Case Study, Major American Municipality	Current City Councillor

5.1. Importance of Visible Minority Representation at the Local Government Level

All interview respondents indicated that visible minority representation at the local government level is important. All of the respondents shared similar views on the importance of visible minority representation, agreeing that it can impact the policies produced by local governments. Interviewee 4 highlighted that having a diverse group of elected officials means that council can reach more groups of people than a more homogenous council might be able to, impacting the city's policy positions. Interviewee 1 specified that having elected officials who are attuned to the cultures and values of different visible minority groups is crucial, as it brings forward a more nuanced approach when dealing with disputes. The same respondent believed that members of visible minority communities better understand the differences between visible minority groups

and subgroups than non-visible minority individuals, and thus are able to engage with them in more meaningful ways. In the absence of this cultural understanding, engagement with these visible minority communities can often feel trivial and superficial. Interviewees 4 and 6 both specified that in the absence of elected representation, councils need to make an effort to engage with visible minority communities through direct contact with citizens or interest groups, in order to ensure that their views are reflected in city policies.

5.2. Barriers Faced by Visible Minority Candidates When Seeking Election

To varying degrees, respondents believed that there are unique barriers faced by visible minority candidates when seeking election at the local level. Interviewee 5 believed that by being a visible minority, individuals are more likely to be disconnected from the political establishment, thereby being at a lower level of base political knowledge and are less likely to have access to political resources to launch a campaign. The same respondent stated that the barriers that visible minorities face in daily life, such as discrimination and facing negative biases, are the same barriers that are present and entrenched in political life. Other interviewees believed that barriers faced by visible minority candidates are more often financial and resource-based in nature. Interviewee 1, 2, and 4 stated that municipal elections are resource-intensive, both time and financial, and they believe that visible minority candidates are less likely to be able to commit the necessary resources, generalizing that this may be due to them having less stable employment conditions or lower financial stability in comparison to non-visible minority candidates. These interviewees also mentioned that visible minorities may not have the social networks to organize an effective campaign, nor might they have the time to effectively campaign, due to precarious work conditions, or culturally tied family responsibilities.

5.3. Electoral System Impact on Visible Minority Candidates

Interviewees 1, 2, and 3 participated in elections under an at-large system and interviewees 4, 5, and 6 under a ward system. Universally, the interviewees all agreed that at-large elections are the most difficult to win. At-large elections require more

resources, both financial, time, and social. As discussed in the section above, half of the interviewees stated that visible minority candidates are less likely to have the necessary resources to effectively run a campaign, and as at-large systems require the most resources, interviewees 4, 5, 6 believed that these systems disadvantaged visible minority candidates. However, not all interviewees believed that a ward system would be easier for visible minority candidates. Interviewees 3, 4, 5, and 6 believed that wards are beneficial for visible minority candidates. These respondents believe that wards improve the chances of visible minorities to be elected, as the financial resources required to successfully campaign in a ward is less than at-large elections.

Interviewees 1 and 2 were hesitant to endorse wards. The interviewees pointed to Canadian cities such as Toronto, Ottawa, and Winnipeg that have wards but still suffer from poor representation of visible minorities. One of these interviewees conceded that wards would only be effective in securing representation in ethnic enclaves, and if the city's visible minority population is more spread out, it may have a minimal or little effect. All of the interviewees from at-large systems cited a concern for polarization that may arise from a ward system, where Councillors would only advocate for policies impacting their constituents.

Interviewee 5 ran in an election that used a ranked ballot style of voting. The interviewee believed that ranked ballot is more favourable to visible minority candidates than first-past-the-post elections. The interviewee believed that ranked ballot enables visible minorities to be able to more easily compete with each other and non-visible minority candidates, whereas in a first-past-the-post system visible minority candidates may end up splitting the vote amongst themselves. The interviewee also mentioned that ranked ballot elections enable visible minority candidates to more readily contest against the name recognition of incumbents.

Interviewee 1, 2, 3, and 4 also noted that visible minority candidates suffer in local government elections when the municipality lacks a party system. Interviewee 4, who ran in a jurisdiction with no political parties, noted that running without the support of a party is taxing on the candidate's resources. The interviewee also noted that they believe this strain is likely increased in an at-large system.

5.4. Role of Voter Turnout on the Diversity of City Councils

All interviewees stated that they believe low voter turnout negatively impacts the diversity of city councils. Interviewees all mentioned that in their jurisdictions, visible minority electors have poor turnout in local government elections, especially when compared to turnout at higher levels of government. All interviewees believed that this is associated with a lack of knowledge on the role of local governments. Interviewee 4 specifically cited the importance of educating the electorate, especially those who do not typically vote, to what specifically municipal governments do. When asked if an education campaign targeted to visible minority electors would increase diversity on city council, responses varied. Interviewees 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 believed that educating visible minorities about municipal governments would most likely increase voter turnout in those groups, however, these respondents did not believe that it alone would have a significant impact on electing visible minorities to council. Interviewee 4 disagreed, stating that in their jurisdiction, spending the time to educate visible minorities about the role of municipal governments encouraged visible minorities to go and vote, and they believe that contributed to them, a visible minority, getting elected in their jurisdiction. When asked, all six interviewees stated that they would support an increased government effort to educate voters on the role of local governments.

5.5. Civic Engagement Programs

Throughout the interviews, interviewees 1 and 2 raised the idea that while many visible minority candidates were running in previous municipal elections, a reason they may have lost is a lack of name recognition and being viewed as not having previous political or governance experience. Interviewee 1 mentioned meeting two young visible minority candidates whom they believed would have made excellent City Councillors, however, were not likely to win due to their lack of political skills and governance experience. One respondent explained that since municipal elections have a lower level of media coverage, often candidates who aren't members of local parties or slates, or who are not incumbents or have served in other political offices, receive little attention from the media and electors. Interviewees were then given examples of programs that would give interested people opportunities to gain experience in local municipal governance and politics in order to gain and develop skills that respondents mentioned

unsuccessful candidates lacked. The programs that were discussed included increasing seats on municipal committees specifically for visible minorities, a youth city official or staff shadowing or internship program for visible minorities, or the establishment of a citizen's assembly. Overall, all respondents viewed a youth internship favourably but questioned the utility of increasing or holding committee seats for visible minorities as well as the establishment of a citizen's assembly on a given subject. Respondents questioned whether or not the later programs would reach those who have no experience or would they more likely attract those who already have experience or a base knowledge of the topics the committee or citizens assembly cover. Two of the four interviewees who discussed this issue in detail questioned whether it was the government's role to provide this type of experience, suggesting that it might be more appropriate for non-profits or other communities to create and run these types of programs. The other two interviewees felt that governments could easily create an internship program or increase the seats on committees, however, making them exclusively for visible minorities may prove politically unpopular.

Chapter 6. Policy Options

6.1. Policy Option 1: Electoral Reform – Moving from at-large elections to a ward system

The first policy option to be analyzed is having municipalities switch from at-large elections for city council to ward-based elections for city council. One factor that makes Metro Vancouver municipalities unique amongst the majority of Canadian cities and the observed case study jurisdictions, is a lack of a ward system. While there are many types of ward systems (i.e., multi-member districts, mixed wards and at-large), for this analysis, wards will only be used to elect City Councillors, while the Mayor would still be elected at-large. It is important to note that since this research looks at representation across multiple cities in Metro Vancouver, no one model of a ward system will be advocated for, but rather, the idea of implementing a ward system. Each city should determine how the city would be divided into wards, and whether each ward would have a single Councillor, or multiple Councillor positions.

Wards are not a new idea in Metro Vancouver. Before 1935, Vancouver had a ward system; however, it was abolished that year, largely to keep social democratic ideologies out of city politics (Andrew et al., 2008) – an idea that no longer seems relevant or prevalent today. In 2003, after holding 17 public forums and providing questionnaires, the Vancouver Electoral Reform Commission decided to put to a vote the issues of at-large versus ward elections. The City of Vancouver held the plebiscite in 2004 on whether it should switch systems for electing Councillors. The “No” side received 35,813 or 54% of the vote, defeating the “Yes” who received 30,499 votes or 46% of the total. While the question was specifically on wards versus the at-large system, the proposed ward structure would have also seen an increase from 10 City Councillors to 14 City Councillors.

Nevertheless, wards re-entered the political discourse in Vancouver during the 2018 municipal election where elected mayoral candidate Kennedy Stewart promised that should the provincial referendum on electoral reform fail, that a ward system similar to the provincial and federal riding system would be introduced at the municipal level in Vancouver (Howell, 2018); the referendum ended up failing. In Surrey, Mayor Doug

McCallum pledged in his election campaign to introduce a ward system to the city in 2014, prior to his election in 2018 (Pablo, 2014).

6.2. Policy Option 2: Civic Engagement – Introducing civic engagement opportunities for visible minority community members

The second policy option to be analyzed is the introduction of civic engagement opportunities. These civic engagement opportunities would be created specifically as an avenue to get individuals more involved in engaging with the challenges facing their city while providing them with an avenue to gain experience in city governance and gain experience within the city structure. Civic engagement opportunities seek to provide potential candidates with an opportunity to build political expertise and gain valuable governance experience. The hope is that through these opportunities, not only will potential candidates gain a higher profile in order to combat incumbency bias and the name recognition deficit normally faced when competing against candidates who had previously served in other political offices or contested elections previously. But these opportunities would also educate potential candidates on city issues, what powers an elected official has, giving them a better idea on how to effectively campaign.

During the expert interviews, respondents brought up the lack of quality visible minority candidates, defining quality as those with the political and governance experience, skills, acumen, and knowledge to be able to successfully get elected. To combat this, this policy option would see municipalities increase the opportunities for citizens to meaningfully engage with governance structures in their city, included but not limited to opening committees up to have citizen membership, forming and hosting consistent citizens assemblies, creating an internship or shadowing program and increasing citizen participation and interaction at council meetings. While many cities have positions opened on their committees, this program would see an internal mandate or, where appropriate, have seats added specifically for visible minority community members.

6.3. Policy Option 3: Civic Education – Educating candidates and electors through programming

The third policy option is the creation and implementation of a civic education program. This program would not be targeted towards potential candidates, but instead would be meant for the entire electorate, differing from Policy Option 2.

Municipalities across Metro Vancouver suffer from consistently low voter turnout. Literature shows that at the municipal level those with low levels of social capital are less likely to vote as they feel disconnected and often have few connections to collected knowledge or have their political knowledge validated (Gludovatz, 2014). A study looking at the 2005 Vancouver local government election found that citizens from the Chinese community were 50% less likely to have political knowledge about the election compared to White citizens (Gludovatz, 2014). Exit polls from that same study showed that White residents were more likely to vote than Chinese residents. Notably, 65% of voters were White, even though they, at the time, accounted for 51% of the city's population (Gludovatz, 2014). Statistics Canada has found electors are more likely to vote if they are older, more educated, and economically well off (Uppal and LaRoche-Côté, 2012). Further, non-immigrants, and those from Western Europe or “Anglosphere” countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, or New Zealand, are more likely to vote than other immigrants or ethnic groups (Uppal and LaRoche-Côté, 2012). In the case of Metro Vancouver, especially examining the ethnic breakdown of electors, this is not representative of the electorate as a whole, in order to have a chance at a more representative government, the active electorate needs to be more representative of the city's demographics.

In the expert interviews, all of the respondents cited the importance of voter turnout, with respondents from Metro Vancouver attributing the low voter turnout to being responsible for the lack of diversity in city council, and those in case study jurisdictions citing increased voter activity amongst visible minorities and being a reason for the increase in representation in their jurisdictions. Interviewees also revealed there can be a lack of understanding of what a city government is responsible for. This confusion can lead to electors deciding not to vote, as they do not value the role of local government, or electors voting for candidates who promise to do things that are not within the purview of a city council. Furthermore, due to the lack of media coverage and traditional (Federal

and Provincial) partisan cues, it is more difficult for an elector to gather information about all the candidates.

The program in question, should be hosted by the city, at city hall, and should include information on the following areas:

- The role and responsibilities of city hall,
- Who makes up city council,
- Role of council, Mayor and committees,
- Role of city staff, who are senior members of city staff (and their roles),
- When and what elections look like,
- How to get involved, including how to connect with City Councillors, staff, and committees,
- Rules and procedures at city council and committee meetings, how to make presentations, or submit questions.

Another opportunity for educating visible minority communities would be to prepare education and outreach material, covering similar information stated above, and have it at cultural festivals and community events. In order for the outreach material to be effective, they should be in English, but also in the languages spoken by the visible minority communities in the jurisdiction. City officials and politicians could also conduct educational outreach through mediums that are heavily utilized by visible minority communities, such as ethnic radio and media sources.

6.4. Policy Option 4: Status Quo

Lastly, maintaining the status quo is an option that should be considered. No matter the actions taken, short of introducing quotas, there is no guarantee to see an increase in visible minority representation.

There is a possibility that we are at a tipping point in history, only requiring the new generation of politicians to get involved, and the older incumbents to age out. Given that Metro Vancouver has cities where the majority of the population are visible minorities, and that the proportion of the visible minority population is growing, future elections may naturally see more representative governments. However, as mentioned,

there are cities with above 50% populations of visible minorities, and there are visible minority candidates that are running local government office, and on average are winning office less often than their non-visible minority counterparts.

Chapter 7. Criteria and Measures

In conducting an assessment of the stated policy options in Chapter 6, four criteria have been established to evaluate each policy option. Attached to each criterion is the measurement that will be used to quantify the criterion. While each criterion is important, all will be equally weighted except for effectiveness, which has been given double the weight. This reflects that the primary purpose of any selected policy should be its effectiveness in addressing the problem and increasing visible minority representation. A table summarizing the criteria and measures to be used in the analysis can be found at the end of the chapter.

7.1. Criterion 1: Effectiveness

One of the most important factors when deciding which policy option to implement is simply, does it work? Here effectiveness is defined as whether or not the given policy option improves the likelihood of visible minorities getting elected. Note that this measures the likelihood of visible minorities getting elected, and not whether or not a given policy will increase the number of visible minorities getting elected. Due to the nature of elections, where multiple variables could impact the results of an election, such as the supply of visible minority candidates running, the only way to guarantee the election of visible minorities would be to implement a quotas system, guaranteeing a set number of seats to visible minorities. However, quotas are not being considered as a viable policy option as quotas do not exist in governments in North America and are problematic as they inherently hinder democratic freedoms.

This criterion will be measured on a three-point scale, of “high likelihood”, “medium likelihood”, and “low likelihood”. Scoring high indicates that the policy option will have the best likelihood of increasing visible minorities being elected to local governments in proportional or better numbers to their share of the population. An option can obtain a “high” score if there is good evidence of effectiveness via both research methods (the case studies and the expert interviews). An option will score “medium” if its likelihood of increasing representation is supported by only one of the undertaken research methods. An option will score “low” if it has not been shown to be effective by either of the research methods.

7.2. Criterion 2: Stakeholder Acceptance – Public Acceptance

Another criterion being considered is stakeholder acceptance. Given that the proposed solutions to this policy problem impact the public, the degree to which the general public supports or opposes the option is considered in this analysis. The degree to which public acceptance is present will be evaluated on a three-point scale, of “high acceptance”, “medium acceptance”, and “low acceptance”. A policy option will be deemed to have “high acceptance” if polls show public support to be 70% or above. A policy option will be deemed to have “medium acceptance” if polls show public support to be between 69% and 40%. A policy option will be deemed to have “low acceptance” if polls show public support to be 39% or below.

7.3. Criterion 3: Stakeholder Acceptance – Politician Acceptance

The acceptance of another stakeholder group will be considered, local government politicians, given that it will be up to these politicians to implement and advocate for any of these options. For this analysis, the degree to which politicians would be willing to accept and implement the policy options will be considered. Politician acceptance will be measured on a three-point scale of “high acceptance”, “medium acceptance”, and “low acceptance”. Since all six of the interviewees were or currently are municipal politicians, and all discussed and shared their views on the policy options that are being considered, we will use their support for a given option as a stand-in for politician acceptance, since we are unable to survey all current Metro Vancouver local government politicians. Note, an interviewee can find an option effective, but withhold support due to numerous factors. Therefore, the interviewee must have stated they support or would be willing to advance the option, with no hesitation. An option will score “high acceptance” if five or more of the interviewees are in favour of implementing the option. An option will score “medium acceptance” if three to four of the interviewees are in favour of implementing the option. An option will score “low acceptance” if zero to two of the interviewees are in favour of implementing the option.

7.4. Criterion 4: Administrative Complexity

Another criterion that will be assessed is how complex the implementation of a given policy option will be. Invasive and complex interventions requiring organizational, or in the case of a government, legislative changes, are challenging and are less likely to be implemented than non-invasive and non-complex interventions. Administrative complexity will be measured on a three-point scale of “high complexity”, “medium complexity”, and “low complexity”. A policy will be given a score of “high complexity” if its implementation requires the creation or amending of provincial legislation, or changes in the practices of province-wide government organizations, such as Elections BC. “Medium complexity” will be measured as requiring legislative change at the city level, restructuring, or change at city-level departments or agencies. “Low complexity” will be measured as requiring no legislative change and minimal to no restructuring of government departments or agencies.

Table 16 Criteria and Measures

Objective	Criterion	Measure
Effectiveness (Double Value)	Likelihood of increasing the number of visible minorities elected to local government, as supported by the undertaken research methods.	Low Likelihood: supported by neither method – (2) Medium Likelihood: supported by one of the two methods – (4) High Likelihood: supported by both of the methods – (6)
Stakeholder Acceptance – Public Support	Acceptability to members of the general public	Low Acceptance: public polling with support at 39% or lower – (1) Medium Acceptance: public polling with support between 40% and 69% – (2) High Acceptance: public polling with support at 70% or above – (3)
Stakeholder Acceptance – Politician Support	Acceptability amongst politicians and likelihood to be implemented by politicians	Low Acceptance: supported by zero to two interviewees – (1) Medium Acceptance: supported by three to four interviewees – (2) High Acceptance: supported by five or more interviewees – (3)

Objective	Criterion	Measure
Administrative Complexity	Complexity, government level and invasiveness of change required to implement policy	<p>Low Complexity: no legislative change and minimal to no restricting of government departments or agencies – (3)</p> <p>Medium Complexity: legislative or departmental/agency change required at municipal level – (2)</p> <p>High Complexity: legislative or departmental/agency change required at the provincial level – (1)</p>

Chapter 8. Policy Evaluation

The following chapter shows the analysis of policy options from Chapter 6 using the evaluation criteria from Chapter 7. The analysis is informed by the case studies and interviews and is presented with a justification for each rating. A matrix summarizing the ratings for each option can be found at the end of the chapter.

8.1. Option 1: Electoral Reform – Moving from at-large elections to a ward system

Effectiveness	Stakeholder Acceptance – Public Acceptance	Stakeholder Acceptance – Politician Acceptance	Administrative Complexity
High Likelihood (6)	Low Acceptance (1)	Medium Acceptance (2)	High Complexity (1)

8.1.1. Effectiveness

The effectiveness of ward systems in increasing the likelihood of getting visible minorities elected to local government is supported in case studies and partially supported by the interviews.

All five of the case study jurisdictions had a version of a ward-based system. Calgary, Clarksville, Long Beach, and Saint Paul all had wards for Councillors and kept the Mayor position elected at-large, while Seattle had a hybrid system, with seven wards and two Councillors elected at-large. In every instance, visible minorities were elected in more representative proportions than in Metro Vancouver’s at-large system. As mentioned in the summary of the case studies (section 4.6), although there are electoral cycles where visible minorities were underrepresented, on the whole, all jurisdictions saw dwindling representation gaps from election to election.

In the case of the expert interviews, three of the interviewees believed that wards were effective in increasing visible minority representation. However, three interviewees voiced partial concern over the effectiveness, citing municipalities such as Toronto, Ottawa, and Winnipeg that have wards, but face underrepresentation of visible

minorities. However, this option is considered supported by the expert interviews, as one of these three did concede that wards would be effective in ethnic enclaves, in ensuring some minimal amount of representation.

Given full support from the case studies and partial support from the interviews, this option scores **high** likelihood.

8.1.2. Stakeholder Acceptance – Public Acceptance

Unfortunately, there has been very little polling done on the subject of implementing a ward system in municipalities in Metro Vancouver, and this imposes a limitation on the analysis. Most of the existing local polling focuses on the two largest cities in Metro Vancouver, the City of Vancouver and the City of Surrey. The only recent polling occurred in 2020 and it focused solely on the City of Vancouver. Research Co. and Glacier conducted a poll where 52% of respondents in Vancouver were in favour of abandoning the at-large system used for municipal elections in favour of a ward system (Research Co., 2020). A poll conducted by Insights West after the 2014 municipal elections placed support for wards in Vancouver at 52%, with 19% opposed, and 28% undecided (Insights West, 2014b). The same poll showed support in Surrey at 43% in favour, while 23% of respondents were opposed, and 34% undecided (Insights West, 2014b). The same Insight's poll found that support in Metro Vancouver outside of Vancouver and Surrey is significantly smaller, with 24% of respondents being in favour of wards, 35% opposed, and 41% undecided (Insights West, 2014b). Another Insight West poll showed in 2014 prior to the municipal election showed support that 53% of respondents in the City of Surrey believed wards were a "very good" or "good" idea (Insight West, 2014a).

If this analysis focused solely on the large municipalities in Metro Vancouver, this policy option would easily score a medium acceptance, given that our measure for medium acceptance demonstrated public support between 69 and 40 percentage points. However, in the most recent Metro Vancouver-wide survey, support for wards outside of Vancouver and Surrey was below the 40% threshold to attain the medium score. Therefore, for the region of Metro Vancouver, this policy option will be scored **low** acceptance.

8.1.3. Stakeholder Acceptance – Politician Acceptance

Of the six interviewees, three outwardly stated that they support wards, while three expressed hesitation in supporting wards over an at-large system. Given that interviewees are being used as a stand-in measure for widespread politician acceptance, and because three of the interviewees support wards, this option scores **medium** acceptance. However, it is important to note that the three interviewees who support a ward system over the at-large system are from municipalities with wards, while the three interviewees who oppose wards are from at-large municipalities. As there are no ward systems in Metro Vancouver, one might imagine that actual support would be lower. However, in the City of Surrey and the City of Vancouver, the mayoral candidates and eventually winners and current Mayors advocated and supported the replacement of the at-large electoral system with wards. In 2021, Surrey's city council instructed city staff to explore switching to a ward system, after a motion was approved in council to consider the transition to a ward system for election City Councillors, with many Councillors advocating that the matter be set to a referendum. Whereas in Vancouver, the Mayor did not pursue electoral reform citing a lack of public pressure (McElroy, 2019). The three interviewees from the at-large jurisdictions also noted a concern over political polarization that may arise from wards, where Councillors would only advocate for issues that impact their constituents.

8.1.4. Administrative Complexity

To replace the at-large election system with a ward system, each municipality can pass a bylaw implementing wards. Whereas changes requiring city bylaws would score medium complexity. However, as mentioned in Chapter 2, municipal elections are shared between the municipality and Elections BC. There is also the added complexity of setting the ward boundaries. While the case studies showed that wards were created with an equal share of the population, the interviews showed that local politicians in municipalities where wards are not implemented questioned how the wards should be divided, whether the population considered should be qualified electors, taxpayers, existing neighbourhood boundaries, etc. Therefore, given the additional complexity of deciding the ward boundaries, as well as the additional coordination required between municipalities and Elections BC, this option scores **high** complexity.

8.2. Option 2: Civic Engagement – Introducing civic engagement opportunities for visible minority community members

Effectiveness	Stakeholder Acceptance – Public Acceptance	Stakeholder Acceptance – Politician Acceptance	Administrative Complexity
Medium Likelihood (4)	Medium Acceptance (2)	Medium Acceptance (2)	Medium Complexity (2)

8.2.1. Effectiveness

In terms of support from the two research methods, this option is supported by one of the two methods. The case studies did not directly have any policies or programs such as the suggested civic engagement programs meant to increase the profile and governance experience of potential visible minority local government candidates. However, the case studies did show that programs that could increase the profile of visible minority candidates and provide them with governance experience would be helpful through an analysis of the win rate of incumbents. The case studies demonstrated that on average, the incumbents, who tend to be the most well covered, and have demonstrated governance experience win electoral contests on average at high rates, with five of the six jurisdictions having incumbents winning at a minimum, 83.33% of electoral contests. Therefore, we can infer from the case studies that programs or methods to raise the profile and experience level of visible minority candidates could help combat this.

It is in the expert interviews, where that link is more clearly made. Interviewees cited that visible minority candidates are viewed as unqualified as they suffer from a lack of governance and political experience. Introducing a suite of civic engagement programs that are designed to give visible minority members of the community experience in governance and civic politics would be beneficial for any visible minorities who may consider or be interested in seeking political office in the future. However, there is no guarantee that the participants will seek election after these programs, and there is no guarantee that if they seek election, that it would be at the local government level. However, programs such as the youth internship program, or increased opportunities to

serve on city committees, would help to resolve the “lack of political experience”. Given that the case studies setup, but do not directly show the effectiveness of this option, and the interviews partially support this option, it scores a **medium** likelihood.

8.2.2. Stakeholder Acceptance – Public Acceptance

While there are no polls specifically on the acceptance of this type of programming, potential public acceptance can be extrapolated by looking at overall public acceptance of affirmative action programs. Even though there are few polls on the subject, a QMI Agency poll in 2010 found that six in 10 Canadian’s say that a person’s race, gender, or ethnic background should not give a person an advantage when looking for a government job (Macleans, 2010). Given that that support in this poll was four in 10 or 40% in favour of affirmative action and given that racial discrimination has become more of a concern in Canada, with a 2020 Ipsos Reid poll citing 60% of Canadians see racism as a serious problem in Canada (Ipsos Reid, 2020), this option scores a **medium** acceptance.

8.2.3. Stakeholder Acceptance – Politician Acceptance

According to the interviews conducted, local government politicians had mixed opinions on the idea of targeted civic engagement programs to raise the profile of visible minorities and provide them with meaningful governance and political experience. While all interviewees were in favour of these types of programs, issues arose with whether or not it was the government’s role to provide these opportunities, with two of four interviewees stating they did not believe it was the government’s responsibility to provide additional opportunities through specialized programs. Many felt that it was incumbent upon potential candidates or individual citizens to find and build that experience. Internships or a shadowing program for visible minority youth was the program that was supported the most, by all six interviewees, while there was a significant lack of support as to the increasing of committee seats or creating a citizen’s assembly specifically for visible minorities. While the interviewees highlighted that skepticism exists, politician support depends on the type of programming initiated. Therefore, given the potential variety of programming, this option scores **medium** acceptance, since all interviewees supported the internship program, but were hesitant to support increasing committee seats for visible minorities.

8.2.4. Administrative Complexity

Regardless of the civic engagement program implemented, some form of additional management will be required. Should the municipality choose an internship program, a staff member will need to be designated to manage and monitor the program, and a recruitment and marketing plan will need to be created. Should the increase in committee spaces for visible minorities be implemented, committee composition regulations will need to be changed to accommodate the increase in seats, and the internal recruitment mandate will need to be enforced. If a citizen’s assembly is to be created, an act of council must be made to establish it, and there needs to be some sort of oversight to ensure that it is running appropriately. Therefore, regardless of the program implemented, the option requires city-level changes, with additional staff oversight, therefore the option scores **medium** complexity.

8.3. Option 3: Civic Education – Educating candidate and electors through programming

Effectiveness	Stakeholder Acceptance – Public Acceptance	Stakeholder Acceptance – Politician Acceptance	Administrative Complexity
Medium Likelihood (4)	Medium Acceptance (2)	High Acceptance (3)	Low Complexity (3)

8.3.1. Effectiveness

Similar to option 2, option 3 is supported by one of the methods, while the other does not directly support it, as there is no specific policy in the jurisdictions, but lays the grounds for why its result could be effective.

Again, the case studies do not directly support a civic education program, as none of the jurisdictions have civic education programs to analyze, however, using the voter turnout data, it can be inferred from the purpose of a civic education program that it would be effective should it be implemented. The case studies found that in election

years with higher voter turnout, local governments are more representative, than in years with lower voter turnout.

In Chapter 2, prior research showed that ethnic voter bias exists and that electors are more likely to vote for a candidate who shares their ethnic background. The interviews support this idea. All six of the interviewees believed that low voter turnout negatively impacts diversity in city councils. All of the interviewees believed that the low turnout is caused by a lack of knowledge of the role of local governments. Four of the six interviewees believed that educating visible minorities about municipal government would increase voter turnout. One interviewee specifically said that they believed it would significantly increase representation of visible minorities on council, while the others said the other three said while it would increase representation, education alone would not significantly increase representation. Therefore, as it is directly supported by one research method, a civic education program scores a **medium** likelihood.

8.3.2. Stakeholder Acceptance – Public Acceptance

While there have been no polls conducted on civic education, there may be a portion of the electorate that feels that the city should be using its resources differently. Further, depending on the range of languages used in education and outreach material, there may be minor public pushback from individuals who are against visible minority groups using their traditional languages in communication. However, this pushback is expected to be minimal, therefore, while there are no signs of strong support, there is equally little opposition. For that reason, this option receives a **medium** acceptance score.

8.3.3. Stakeholder Acceptance – Politician Acceptance

According to the interviews conducted, no politician was against a public education campaign to better inform electors on the role of local governments. During the interview process, many local government politicians saw this as an opportunity to expand the education role they play and increase opportunities to interact with their constituents. For this reason, the option scores a **high** acceptance.

8.3.4. Administrative Complexity

The complexity of this policy option varies depending on how robust and inclusive the education campaign is. If there is a creation the creation of a civic education program is taken, there needs to be a staff member to manage the program and conduct it. If the program is simply attending local community festivals, and creating new educational material, the complexity increases for each additional language that the material needs to be translated into. For cities that have non-homogenous visible minority communities who speak many languages besides English, that may require additional work, however, governments have experience in creating this kind of materials and translating them into different languages. Therefore, this option scores **low** complexity.

8.4. Option 4: Status Quo

Effectiveness	Stakeholder Acceptance – Public Acceptance	Stakeholder Acceptance – Politician Acceptance	Administrative Complexity
Low Likelihood (2)	Medium Acceptance (2)	High Acceptance (3)	Low Complexity (3)

8.4.1. Effectiveness

None of the research methods directly supported the status quo. In the cases of the case studies, all of the jurisdictions were different from Metro Vancouver municipalities, and their success in electing representative local governments is a direct argument against the status quo in Metro Vancouver. In the instance of the interviews, all six interviewees stated that visible minority representation at the local government level is important, and the interviewees located in Metro Vancouver acknowledge that the status quo is problematic. As such, this option scores a **low** likelihood.

The status quo, over time, has resulted in a long history of underrepresentation of visible minorities in Metro Vancouver municipal governments. Staying with the status quo does not provide a guarantee that more candidates will run, or that candidates will

get elected. Furthermore, there are still barriers present that adversely impact visible minority candidates (as discussed in section 5.2), such as the high burden of financing campaigns, time commitments and networks required to run successful campaigns, as well as combatting incumbent or previous experience bias, and party name recognition.

8.4.2. Stakeholder Acceptance – Public Acceptance

Citing the Insight's West poll from Policy Option 1, outside of Surrey and Vancouver, 35% of Metro Vancouver respondents were opposed to switching from an at-large system to wards, while 41% were undecided (Insights West, 2014). In Surrey, those opposed to wards favouring the status quo accounted for 23% of respondents, with 34% undecided (Insights West, 2014). In Vancouver, 19% of respondents were in favour of the status quo, while 28% were undecided (Insights West, 2014). However, given the 2004 failed plebiscite in Vancouver for wards, with 54% opposed (City of Vancouver, n.d.), it can estimate that the undecided group is more likely to vote against changing the system. This would be in line with the other failed attempts at electoral reform in B.C., where voters decided to maintain the status quo. Therefore, factoring in the undecided as being more likely to vote in favour of keeping the status quo, this option scores **medium** acceptance, as overall it does not exceed the 60% threshold to qualify for high acceptance.

8.4.3. Stakeholder Acceptance – Politician Acceptance

At present, the status quo favours non-visible minority candidates and incumbents. Interviewees were not directly asked if they support the status quo, therefore, there is no number that can be used for this analysis. However, throughout the interviews, they all, in various combinations, found concerns with all potential policy options. This indicates an aversion to changing from the status quo. Furthermore, facilitating the improvement in candidate quality, or increase the potential that the ruling political elite may not hold onto elected power, is counter to their self-interest and is a primary driver as to why electoral reform or other policy changes often do not occur. Self-interested politicians, once they attain power, do not want to change the rules of the game if it will serve to disadvantage them in the future. Therefore, for this reason, maintain the status quo receives a score of **high** acceptance.

8.4.4. Administrative Complexity

As no changes would be required when keeping the status quo, this option scores **low** complexity.

Table 17 Summary of Policy Analysis

Policy Option	Effectiveness	Stakeholder Acceptance – Public Acceptance	Stakeholder Acceptance – Politician Acceptance	Administrative Complexity	Total Score
1 - Electoral Reform: Moving from at-large elections to a ward system	High Likelihood (6)	Low Acceptance (1)	Medium Acceptance (2)	High Complexity (1)	10
2 - Increased Civic Engagement Programs for Visible Minorities	Medium Likelihood (4)	Medium Acceptance (2)	Medium Acceptance (2)	Medium Complexity (2)	10
3 - Ongoing Public Civic Education Campaign	Medium Likelihood (4)	Medium Acceptance (2)	High Acceptance (3)	Low Complexity (3)	12
4 - Status Quo	Low Likelihood (2)	Medium Acceptance (2)	High Acceptance (3)	Low Complexity (3)	10

Chapter 9. Recommendations and Conclusion

As can be seen in Table 17, all the options have their advantages and disadvantages. Based on the analysis in Chapter 8, education seems to be the best option to implement, scoring the highest. It is the least complex to implement, and the most widely accepted option by local government politicians. As the interviewees indicated, a lack of knowledge on the role of local government negatively impacts voter turnout, and as shown by the case study analysis, in the election years with higher voter turnout, visible minority representation increased. This is due to the presence of ethnic voter bias, as seen in Chapter 2. Expanding the portion of the electorate who actively vote, can lead to a government that is more representative of that electorate. However, as pointed out by the interviewees, education alone may not be the most effective solution to the problem. Therefore, due to the minimal complexity of implementing an education program, this research recommends another option along with an education program. While all other options analyzed scored the same as the status quo, given the status quo is the least effective option at increasing visible minority representation options that are deemed to be more effective should be considered.

The second recommendation from this research is the adoption of a suite of civic engagement programs meant to increase the profile of potential future visible minority candidates and provide visible minorities with governance experience. As can be seen by the analysis in the case studies and Chapter 2, incumbents and those with prior governance experience hold an advantage in electoral contests due to their name recognition and experience. While levels of support varied depending on the type of program, internships or shadowing programs for visible minorities, especially youth, proved to be amongst the most popular. However, other options such as expanding committee membership to include more visible minorities should be considered at the discretion of the implementing municipalities.

Finally, although the first option of wards is not being recommended due to its complexity and being least supported by the public overall, this option should be considered and further evaluated by the larger municipalities in Metro Vancouver. Given that wards were deemed to be the most effective option, each municipality should determine if wards are appropriate for their context. If we look at public approval of

wards in the large municipalities, we see higher rates of acceptance in the large municipalities, especially in Surrey and Vancouver, than in smaller municipalities. Although interviewees from the at-large jurisdiction raised other concerns over wards, such as political polarization from Councillors only advocating for their constituents, alternatives such as a mixed ward and at-large system, as seen in Seattle, is a viable alternative.

Given that this area of research is fairly new in B.C., and due to the limitations of this research, there is a need for further study on the effects and impacts of parties and slates, and campaign financing on visible minorities in local government elections. Chapter 2 and Chapter 5 touched on the important role of parties and slates in helping support candidates, as well as the barriers that lack of finances play in the electability of candidates. It is clear that policies could be implemented to help overcome these, however, the extent of the impact and what could feasibly be done needs further analysis than was capable in this capstone. Another area of further study that should be conducted is the rate of voter turnout among visible minorities in Metro Vancouver. While the Chapter 2 and 5 touched on the idea of low voter turnout occurring amongst visible minorities, no concrete data could be found in the case of Metro Vancouver. Therefore, a study to determine the extent of low visible minority voter turnout would be helpful in informing future policy action and determine the effectiveness of any policies meant to increase voter turnout among visible minorities. Finally, while this research focused generally on Metro Vancouver, the city of Richmond presents an interesting case worth further study. Studies and media coverage in British Columbia tend to focus on Vancouver or Surrey, however Richmond has the largest proportion of visible minorities in Metro Vancouver (75.65% of the total population is visible minority), and it has the largest representation gap of all the observed municipalities (53.43 percentage points).

Representation in government is clearly important. Descriptive representation leads to a greater sense of fairness amongst the electorate in decision-making and increases empowerment amongst visible minorities who are better represented. But more importantly, having a representative government minimizes the risks of having the voices of minorities left out of the discussion. All of the interviewees stressed the importance of visible minorities being represented in local governments, and if the current system in Metro Vancouver is delivering underrepresentation, government needs

to take action. Through education and civic engagement opportunities, electing a diverse city becomes a possibility without having to overhaul the nature of our current system.

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Appendix

Incumbents and Previous Governance Experience Tables

Table A.1 Impact of Incumbency and Previous Governance Experience on Winning in the 2018 City Councillor Elections of the Seven Largest Municipalities in Metro Vancouver

City	Number of Positions	Total Number of Candidates	Number of Candidates with Previous Governance Experience (including at different levels of government and incumbents)	Number of Candidates with Previous Governance Experience who won	Number of Candidates with Previous Governance Experience Were Elected / Number of Candidates with Previous Governance Experience	Number of Candidates without Previous Governance Experience Who Won / Number of Candidates without Previous Governance Experience
Surrey	8	48	6	1	16.67%	16.67%
Vancouver	10	71	14	5	35.71%	8.77%
Richmond	8	30	10	6	60%	10%
Burnaby	8	23	9	7	77.78%	14.29%
Coquitlam	8	19	6	6	100%	15.38%
Delta	6	20	4	3	75%	18.75%
Township of Langley	8	23	10	6	60%	15.38%

Table A.2 Impact of Incumbency and Previous Governance Experience on Winning in the 2018 Mayoral Elections of the Seven Largest Municipalities in Metro Vancouver

City	Total Number of Candidates	Number of Candidates with Previous Governance Experience (including at different levels of government and incumbents)	Did the Elected Mayor have Previous Governance Experience?
Surrey	8	3	Yes
Vancouver	21	5	Yes
Richmond	6	2	Yes
Burnaby	4	2	No
Coquitlam	3	1	Yes
Delta	6	1	No
Township of Langley	3	1	Yes

City of Surrey

Of the eight mayoral candidates, three of the candidates had prior experience with one having previously served as Mayor, and two having previously served as City Councillors. Of note, these three candidates received the three highest shares of votes (41.1%, 25.7%, and 25.3%). Of the eight City Councillor winners, one had previous experience, previously serving as a member of the provincial Legislative Assembly. This candidate also received the highest vote share percentage of all candidates with 36.5%. Of the 48 city council candidates, six had prior experience, and placed 1st, 10th, 11th, 16th, 17th, and 24th, receiving 36.5%, 24.8%, 24.3%, 23.4%, 23.3%, and 8% of the vote share, respectively.

City of Vancouver

Of the 21 mayoral candidates, five candidates had prior experience. The winner had previously served as a Member of Parliament. The other candidates with experience placed 4th, 5th, 7th, and 9th, receiving 6.7%, 5.6%, 2%, and 0.8% of the total vote share, respectively. Of the 10 elected City Councillors, five had previous experience (two having been incumbents, and three having served in other public offices). Of all 71 City Councillor candidates, 14 of the candidates had prior experience. These candidates placed 1st, 3rd, 6th, 8th, 10th, 13th, 16th, 19th, 22nd, 23rd, 29th, 44th, 49th, 61st,

receiving 39.5%, 30.2%, 26.9%, 25.3%, 24.7%, 22.4%, 20.7%, 16.7%, 14.2%, 13.2%, 8.7%, 6.5%, 4.6%, and 2.4%.

City of Richmond

Of the six mayoral candidates, two candidates had prior experience. The winner was the incumbent and received 62.9% of the vote, while the other candidate placed 3rd and received 8.7% of the vote. Of the eight elected City Councillors, six were incumbents. Of the 30 city council candidates, 10 had prior experience, and placed 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 12th, and 13th, receiving 43.1%, 39.5%, 37.2%, 35.6%, 32.1%, 27.3%, 27.1%, 25.5%, 23.1%, and 23% of the vote share, respectively.

City of Burnaby

Of the four mayoral candidates, two had prior experience, one being the incumbent (placing 2nd, with 40.7% of the vote) and one having served at another level of government (placing 3rd and receiving 4.4% of the vote). Of the eight elected City Councillors, seven had prior experience, all being incumbents. Of the 23 City Councillor candidates, nine had prior experience. These candidates placed 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 9th, and 12th, receiving 39.9%, 39.4%, 39.3%, 37.6%, 35.7%, 33.5%, 32%, 31.1% and 26.6% of the vote share, respectively.

City of Coquitlam

Of the three mayoral candidates, only one had prior experience as the incumbent, who won with 68.7% of the total vote share. Of the eight elected City Councillors, six had prior experience as incumbents. These six were also the only candidates out of the 19 candidates with previous experience. These six placed 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th, receiving 60%, 59.7%, 51.9%, 51.1%, 44.4% and 44.3% of the total vote share, respectively.

City of Delta

Of the six mayoral candidates, only one had prior experience, having served at a different level of government. The candidate placed 3rd, receiving 23.4% of the share of total votes. Of the six elected City Councillors, three had prior experience, with one having served at a different level of government and two being incumbents. Of the 20

City Councillors, four had prior experience, and placed 2nd, 4th, 5th, and 10th, receiving 44.6%, 42.1%, 38.1%, and 26.6% of the total vote share, respectively.

Township of Langley

Of the three mayoral candidates, only one had previous experience. Serving as the incumbent, this candidate won the election with 57.7% of the total vote share. Of the eight elected City Councillors, six had prior experience, with five being incumbents, and one having previously served as a City Councillor. Of the 23 city council candidates, 10 had prior experience. Those with prior experience placed 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th, and 17th, receiving 46.7%, 38.9%, 36.9%, 35.8%, 35.6%, 33.9%, 32.8%, 30.8%, 28%, and 20.6% of the vote, respectively.