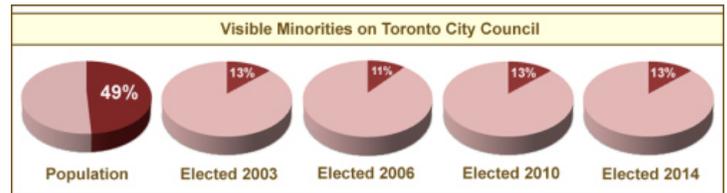# *Ranked Ballots and Diversity*

Ranked ballots produce results that are more representative of a city's diversity than the current first-past-the-post (FPTP) voting system. Ranked ballots have shown their potential to gradually increase ethnic, racial and political diversity in addition to boosting female representation in government, by encouraging more female and minority candidates to seek office and by empowering diverse communities.

Toronto's current voting system limits diversity among our leaders

- Currently, women and minorities are seriously under-represented in Toronto City Council

Women on Toronto City Council — Population 52%, Elected 2003 31%, Elected 2006 22%, Elected 2010 33%, Elected 2014 31%

Visible Minorities on Toronto City Council — Population 49%, Elected 2003 13%, Elected 2006 11%, Elected 2010 13%, Elected 2014 13%

- Across Canada, women account for only 16% of our mayors (elected by the first-past-the-post system)

- In November 2013, Minneapolis used a ranked ballot in their municipal election for the second time. They elected: a female mayor, 46% female Council, and their first Latino, Hmong, and Somali Councillors ever

- San Francisco, which has a similar demographic make up to Toronto, 16 of the 18 officeholders elected under ranked-choice voting are visible minorities, including the first Asian-American mayor in the city's history. "For critics who say [ranked ballots are] too confusing, especially for minorities, these results suggest otherwise... Ranked-choice voting is well-suited to cities such as San Francisco and Oakland, which have a high degree of racial/ethnic, social and cultural diversity, a high level of political activism and mobilization, and multiple axes of political conflict." - Arend Lijphart (University of California, San Diego) and Richard DeLeon (San Francisco State University)

Fact Check: Do all kinds of voters find ranked ballots easy to use?

Yes. Voters have consistently proven that ranked ballots are simple and easy to use. Recently in the US, valid ballots cast represented 99.9% (in Minneapolis 2013), 99.6% (in San Francisco 2011) and 99.7% (in Oakland 2010) with more than 4/5 of American voters choosing to rank multiple candidates (rather than exercising their right to select only one candidate).

OFFICIAL BALLOT
[2] Candidate A
[3] Candidate B
[ ] Candidate C
[1] Candidate D
[ ] Candidate E

Visible minorities, immigrants, seniors and the less-educated do not find ranked ballots any more difficult to understand than other voters. In an independent study of the 2009 election in Minneapolis performed by St Cloud University, 97% of minority voters found the ranked ballot easy to understand, compared to 95% of the general public. In Minneapolis in 2013, an exit poll conducted by Edison Research showed 85% of all voters found ranked choice voting simple to use, including 82% of voters of colour, 81% of voters without a college education, and 81% of voters aged 65 and up.

For Burlington VT's first election with ranked ballots: "The city spent just three cents per registered voter on voter education, but voters in the lowest-income areas were just as likely to rank additional candidates as voters in high-income areas. The full instant runoff tally was completed less than two hours after the polls closed." (www.fairvote.org/give-ranked-choice-a-chance)

We're proposing a small, simple change that would make Toronto's elections more fair, diverse, inclusive and friendly. **www.rabit.ca**

RaBIT
Ranked Ballot Initiative of Toronto