

In the last decade, many cities have consciously considered their choice of election method, rather than accepting it as a matter of tradition. As a result some California cities and school districts have switched from at-large to district elections to improve representation on their councils and/or boards of education. Closer to home, Berkeley, Oakland, San Francisco, and San Leandro have chosen to switch from two round runoff elections to elections using ranked choice voting (which allows voters to indicate which candidate receives their vote in a runoff, thus eliminating the need for a separate runoff election).

In this spirit of recognizing democracy is not a goal achieved, but an ideal to continually approach, Albany's Charter Review Committee is reviewing Albany's choice of method for electing its representatives. This is the first such review since in 36 years according to the available institutional memory, and probably for considerably longer. This review may result in an affirmation of the method currently in use, or it may result in a recommendation for change. The Committee believes either outcome will serve the community's interest in maintaining a strong democracy.