

2025 General Election Guide



Introduction

On November 4, 2025, thousands of Minnesota voters will head to the polls with several high-profile and politically significant races on the ballot. While the Minneapolis and St. Paul mayoral races are likely the highest profile offices up for election, key city council races in Minneapolis and Bloomington are on the ballot along with two seats in the Minnesota Senate, either of which could determine control of the chamber.

The Larkin Hoffman Public Affairs team is involved in Minnesota politics at all levels of government. Our team works with elected officials at the municipal, county, regional, state, and federal levels and has built decades of relationships with key elected and appointed public policy leaders. This election guide is intended to provide readers a high-level overview of several of the political contests on the ballot in 2025.





Races to Watch

Minneapolis Mayor | Saint Paul Mayor

Minneapolis Mayoral Race – While the city’s use of Ranked Choice Voting means that there is no primary election and all fifteen candidates will be on the November ballot, there are three candidates who have emerged as serious challengers to two-term incumbent, Democratic Mayor Jacob Frey.

While the Minneapolis mayor’s race was always going to be competitive, the dynamic of the campaign changed significant when state Sen. Omar Fateh (DFL-Minneapolis) emerged from the Minneapolis DFL convention in July having received the party’s endorsement over Mayor Frey. The Frey campaign subsequently filed a challenge with the Minnesota DFL, citing issues with the electronic voting system and the security of the delegate lists. In August, the Minnesota DFL’s Constitution, Bylaws & Rules Committee vacated the endorsement and barred the Minneapolis DFL from holding another endorsing convention this year. The decision was criticized by some Democrats as emblematic of insiders controlling the political process while other Democrats lauded the decision as the state party correcting the administrative mistakes of the city organizers.

Mayor Frey has held office since 2018 and has led the city during a number of difficult periods, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the civil unrest following the murder of George Floyd. He has also overseen charter amendments in the city that have transitioned significant municipal authority away from the Minneapolis City Council to the Mayor’s office while frequently battling with some of the most progressive city council members.

Mayor Frey's top challengers include:

State Sen. Omar Fateh: A self-declared democratic socialist, Fateh is seen by many as Frey's top challenger. Fateh has served in the Minnesota Senate since 2021 and previously worked for the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Minnesota Department of Revenue.

Rev. DeWayne Davis: Rev. Davis is the current Lead Minister at Plymouth Congregational Church and is a former congressional aid. He was appointed by Mayor Jacob Frey as co-chair of the Community Safety Work Group in the aftermath of the death of George Floyd.

Jazz Hampton: Hampton is a Minneapolis attorney and co-founder of TurnSign!, an app that instantly connects drivers with attorneys during traffic stops to ensure rights are protected. Hampton is a lifelong resident of Minneapolis.

Minneapolis is one of a number of cities in Minnesota (including Saint Paul and Bloomington) that uses Ranked Choice Voting, whereby Minneapolis voters can rank their top three candidates, and if no candidate receives a majority of the first-choice votes, the lowest-ranking candidates are dropped with people's second choices being counted until such time as a candidate receives a majority. In Minneapolis, the top challengers have generally argued that a change is needed and have encouraged supporters to rank other challengers and leave Mayor Frey off their ballots entirely.

The competitive nature of the race means we are unlikely to have a winner announced on election night as second and third choice votes may need to be counted in the days following the election.

Saint Paul Mayoral Race – Across the river, Saint Paul has a competitive mayor's race of its own as four candidates are challenging the two-term incumbent, Democratic Mayor Melvin Carter. Having also served as mayor since 2018, Carter's tenure in office has been markedly quieter than his Minneapolis counterpart. That is not to say, however, that it has been without criticism as Mayor Carter's administration has come under significant critique for increased property taxes and a struggling downtown business district.

The most high-profile challenger to Mayor Carter is current state Rep. Kaohly Her (DFL-St. Paul), who is a mom, a finance and non-profit professional and previously served as a policy director for Mayor Carter. Other candidates for mayor include research biophysicist Yan Chen, engineer Adam Dullinger, and local business owner Mike Hilborn.

The winner of this year's election will serve a three-year term instead of four, as Saint Paul residents voted last year to move municipal elections to even-numbered years to align with the state election cycle beginning in 2028. St. Paul also uses ranked choice voting, but allows up to six choices to be listed, compared to the three allowed in Minneapolis.



Races to Watch

Minneapolis & Bloomington City Councils

Minneapolis City Council – All 13 Minneapolis City Council seats are up for re-election with no seat going uncontested. Three sitting city council members—Jeremiah Ellison, Andrea Jenkins, and Emily Koski—are not running for re-election, drawing many new faces to politics with those vying for their seats.

In recent years, a coalition of more progressive city council members, including some who describe themselves as Democratic Socialists, have won enough seats to be able to override Mayor Frey's veto on major budget issues. However, in 2025 there has been significant political investment, including third-party expenditures from organizations like the All of Mpls PAC, in support of individuals considered slightly more politically moderate and more likely to be aligned with Mayor Frey.

This dynamic is particularly noticeable in the open seats, including in Ward 5, where Councilmember Ellison has served the last two terms, and six candidates are vying to take his place. The leading contenders include Pearl Warren, who is seen as a more moderate candidate, and Ethrophic Burnett, who is more progressive. Similarly, in Ward 8 where Councilmember Jenkins is stepping down, progressive Soren Stevenson and moderate Josh Bassais are considered the front runners.

Bloomington City Council – The third largest municipality in the Twin Cities, the City of Bloomington, also has odd-year municipal elections, with three of its six city council seats on the ballot this fall. Specifically, Districts 1 and 2, as well as an at-large seat are up for re-election this November and will be determined using Ranked Choice Voting. Winners will serve four-year terms. District 1, which is comprised of seven precincts in the southeast area of the city, will see three candidates, incumbent Dwayne Lowman, Jessica Keehan, and Aaron Smith compete for the seat. District 2, comprised of eight precincts mostly in the southwest area of the city, has two candidates vying for the seat, incumbent Shawn Nelson and Andrew Luckcraft. For the at-large seat, Johnathan Minks, Danielle Robertson, and Isaak Rooble will square off.

Races to Watch

Minnesota Senate Special Elections

In addition to the perennial “off-year” municipal elections being held this November, two special elections will be held for seats in the Minnesota Senate. Senate District 29, which encompasses parts of Wright, Meeker, and Hennepin Counties, was represented by Sen. Bruce Anderson (R-Buffalo) prior to his unexpected passing in July. Senate District 47, which covers portions of Washington County in the east metro, was previously presented by Sen. Nicole Mitchell (DFL-Woodbury) prior to her resigning the seat in August after being convicted of felony burglary.

While Democrats currently have a 33-32 majority, neither party has the 34-vote majority needed to pass legislation in the Minnesota Senate.

Senate District 29 – Republican candidate Michael Holmstrom, a small business owner living in Buffalo, will face DFL candidate Louis McNutt, a resident of Buffalo and a heavy equipment mechanic for the MN Department of Transportation, in a special election for SD 29 on Election Day. This seat leans Republican.

Senate District 47 – State Rep. Amanda Hemmingsen-Jager (DFL-Woodbury) defeated State Rep. Ethan Cha (DFL-Woodbury) in the Democratic primary and will now face Republican candidate Dwight Dorau, a retired Air Force commander and colonel and current aerospace science instructor. This seat has been somewhat competitive over the last decade, and while Democrats have represented the area in recent years, Republicans see this seat as a chance of flipping the majority.





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This document provides LHPA's analysis of the 2025 General Election in Minnesota. It highlights a number of contested races both at the state and local level and their potential impact on Minnesota's political landscape. The goal is not to prognosticate or predict the outcome of individual races but rather to provide a general feel for the tenor of the 2025 campaigns and highlight a handful of competitive races that are worth noting.

As always, please feel free to contact us if you have questions about any particular race or how various results might impact your ongoing engagement with the State of Minnesota or the Minnesota Legislature.