

An explanation of the Preferential Ridings  
Proportional electoral system combined  
with an explanation of the relevant  
Condorcet counting method.

# The Preferential Ridings- Proportional System

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Before venturing into this document, I urge you to invest 5 minutes in the following short video, “Do you want your vote to count”? <https://goo.gl/NLIVbg>

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## Introduction

Canada desperately needs a new approach to electing our chosen representatives in government that adequately reflects all Canadians. Our current system, “First-Past-The-Post” or FPTP, has historically resulted in elections whose results represent the needs, wants and values of less than half of the voters involved. Probably because of this, the system has disengaged Canadian voters to such a degree that in the last federal election, only 61% of eligible Canadians bothered to vote at all (Elections Canada, 2011). This is not the face of a modern, considered and just democracy, and it doesn’t have to be the face of our democracy. The Preferential Ridings Proportional (PRP) system is one option to give Canada more inclusive and truly representative democracy. The overall goal of PRP is to build rather than split community, helping to satisfy the important psychological needs of belonging and empowerment.

First past the post elections have a major problem: no matter how well a winning candidate does in his or her riding, all voters who did not vote for that candidate must, by definition, have wasted their votes. If a candidate wins 51% of the vote, 49% of voters wasted their time. Worse still, with Canada’s ridings most often having more than two candidates, FPTP results fall still further from representing all votes. As past election results often show, there is nothing preventing a party that garnered well under 50% of the popular vote from winning enough ridings for a decisive majority. In reality, FPTP is a lottery.

FPTP voting evolved under a two-party system, where a candidate must secure more than 50% of the votes in a riding to win. Further, this proportionality only holds true at the riding level and even with just two parties, a smaller share of the total vote can elect a majority government if the voters for the larger party happen to be concentrated within a small number of ridings. If one party is substantially more popular at election time, the difference is massively magnified to the point where almost all representatives are from that party, so nobody else’s viewpoint is represented in the legislature. Example: Alberta 2008 where the Conservatives had a majority of votes, but were over represented in seats by 34%. Applying the PRP vote counting system to the same voting results brought this difference down to 2%. Other party MLAs were elected in several areas throughout Alberta with a geographic connection to the voters who elected them. Vote effectiveness, that is the proportion of voters who could point to an MLA whom their vote helped to elect, went from 54% to 93%.

Unfortunately, whatever effectiveness the present FPTP voting has, it decreases dramatically with every party running beyond the first two. Elections Canada recognized eighteen registered national political parties in Canada on 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2013 (Elections Canada, 2013). This means that in theory, a riding in Canada could have eighteen candidates on the ballot, and in that theoretical riding, a candidate could win the seat if he/she secured as little as 7% of the vote. These factors have contributed to false majority governments time and time again. Is it any wonder that voters are frustrated and demoralized?

This has led to a steady decrease in voter turnout from the end of the Second World War onward, with only slight increases for some specific election years between 1988 and 2011. The number one reason cited by Canadians who did not vote in 2011’s national election was cited as “disinterest in voting” (Statistics Canada, 2011). On further analysis, most non-voters were disinterested in voting because they felt that either their vote didn’t matter, or that their vote would be wasted. This is the troubling reality of the FPTP voting system in Canada.

## Proposal – A new more inclusive combination electoral system

We are proposing a new system to remedy these problems with FPTP. The goal is to give visible meaning to the efforts of as many participants as possible in elections. As previously pointed out, in Yukon’s 2011 general election, 54% of the votes had no effect on who was elected.

The Preferential Ridings Proportional (PRP) system is a hybrid system that incorporates elements from Canada’s present riding based system, but employs preferential voting, and proportional representation-based systems in a novel and comprehensive way. This would allow almost every vote cast in an election to have some impact on the resultant legislative body. PRP is not the only system that could achieve this, but this system, developed in Canada over the course of several years, could provide inclusive, connected and fair representation to almost every voting Canadian. PRP is very focused on maximising the impact of every vote and in electing representatives in a geographic association with the electors in a region.

The development of the PRP system is based on what people interested in improving the system said they wanted in an electoral system. These answers were clear:

1. The new system had to be simple for voters to use.
2. It had to be fair and give meaning to the efforts of almost all candidates and constituents.
3. It could not significantly change the number of elected representatives.
4. It had to have elected riding MP’s to be wanted or accepted by more than half the voters.
5. It had to give a feeling of geographic connection between the constituents and the elected representative(s) their vote elected.
6. It had to account for Canada’s multi-party political arena.

The PRP system reorganizes the country, province or territory into “paired ridings”, roughly twice the size of our current ridings. At an Election, instead of two representatives, the new paired ridings will each elect only a single representative occupying a “Preferential Seat” in Parliament. This Representative will be elected by a “Condorcet” preferential vote counting technique as opposed to the present FPTP. Having half the current number of riding seats creates the same number of “Proportional Seats” without the need to add seats. The Condorcet technique is explained below in detail.

This resulting other half of the representatives will be elected to Proportional Seats to give representation to voters who did not vote for the winner in their riding. The allocation of proportional seats will reflect relative popularity of the Parties in geographically coherent “Electoral Areas.” To ensure that these representatives are elected by voters and have local identity, these proportional representatives will be the most successful candidates of their Political Party within the given electoral area, who were not directly elected to Preferential Seats.

## The benefits of the Preferential Ridings Proportional PRP electoral system

This system was designed to deliver a parliamentary distribution of seats that fairly represent the distribution of political opinion among Canadian voters resulting in collaborative governance that can be held to be accountable, transparent and simple for voters. False majority governments would not occur.

PRP has been developed in Yukon over several years with the continued feedback of our community, our leaders, and our voters. The electoral system, to respond to the community’s expressed wants in the Introduction, will be shown here with the ballots and more fully explained later. If a voting system is to result in proportional representation and to recognize

local representation, it is essential to distinguish voter support for political parties from voter support for candidates. The party preference would be the main factor in determining the occupants of proportional seats.

The PRP system stops false majority governments. The PRP system's inclusiveness allows Canadians to vote with confidence that their vote will have an effect on who is elected. PRP allows Canadian democracy to express our common values of inclusion, cooperation, and community. The PRP system allows voters to vote for the candidate they feel represents their viewpoint and their values without the fear of splitting the vote, or losing their voice. PRP lets almost all Canadians be heard in parliament, even if their party's candidate doesn't win their riding's preferential seat. Importantly, PRP allows these votes to matter with minor change to the size of Parliament. PRP respects the traditions of government while renovating and breathing new life into the electoral process. The proportional aspect of PRP has been applied to past FPTP election results to show the resultant balanced power structure had almost all votes counted effectively. Collaborative governance with accountability, rather than false majority governance would have occurred.

As can be seen in the results, when almost all voters can point to a representative their vote helped to elect, it can give voters feelings of empowerment, inclusion and belonging in the governed community.

There is no perfect electoral system, but clearly some are much better than others. This Canadian proposal, which draws upon our national traditions, recognizes the diversity of our vast country and acknowledges the multiparty political landscape, is certainly more representative than Canada's present system. PRP addresses many of the pressures that today discourage voters.

All votes would have a very high probability of counting when they vote with their heart and mind. Strategic voting would no longer be necessary to have an effective vote. Preferential voting among multiple candidates in a riding no longer means that a candidate can win a riding with a laughably low vote count. Vote splitting is not the devastating conundrum FPTP voting makes it.

Governments are accountable to their Opposition Parties and more constituents can feel a connection to their representative. With minority governments, instead of false majorities, Governments must work collaboratively with Opposition for the good of the people whom all elected Members represent. PRP can bring inclusion and belonging back to the heart of Canada's democracy.

## **Descriptive details of Preferential Ridings Proportional - PRP**

The simplest parts of PRP have been discussed previously, but the details and nuances of the system deserve more explanation.

### **Electoral Areas: Proportional seats and Preferential Riding seats**

In the PRP electoral system, to have proportional seats without adding seats, in the first PRP election, Canada's or Yukon's current ridings must first be redrawn to represent approximately double the population of the current ridings. This would halve the number of ridings. For simplicity of implementation in the first election, present boundary lines could generally be used to double riding size. This would result in an equal number of proportional seats that would make it possible to have almost all votes represented in the House.

Provinces with an uneven number of ridings for pairing would have to leave one riding at its present size. To be fair to the ridings that doubled in size, that riding would be an independent riding. It would vote preferentially to elect its most wanted or accepted candidate, but would not be in an electoral area for proportional seats.

For later discussion of concerns regarding governance, voters could know the representative(s) their vote elected.

Stating it another way, with Electoral Areas, preferential and proportional seats can be awarded according to the votes cast without usually affecting the overall size of the House. The Members elected preferentially would occupy preferential riding seats. These MPs would be determined by the results of the Condorcet method of counting that is discussed later. It is important to note that in counting the votes according to the Condorcet method, the raw number of first-choice votes a candidate receives is not always a clear indication of who has won the preferential riding seat. The winner of the preferential seat is the most wanted or accepted candidate, collectively for voters, among the candidates listed for election in that riding. Seats would not be won because of split votes.

## Vote Counting for preferential seats

The present system results in only the most wanted candidate being elected, sometimes representing less than 30% of voters. It is not known whether or not the candidate was also a well accepted candidate. The PRP Condorcet method determines which candidate is most wanted or accepted by a riding's constituents. On each ballot, candidates are ranked preferentially by the voter.

### Details of the Condorcet method

A Condorcet method refers to a process that takes all votes received for each candidate, and compares them to the votes received by each other candidate in order of preferential rank on each ballot. Using the PRP counting method, each candidate is compared individually to each other candidate, gaining one point each time chosen ahead of another candidate. The PRP counting method allows a voter's choices to be considered all at once without the need for eliminations. When each candidate's standing in comparison to the others is calculated, it's possible to determine relatively fast and accurately the total point score that each candidate has achieved in their riding. Once this process is complete, the PRP Condorcet scores of all the candidates can be determined for a quick snapshot of the overall results.

## Condorcet method using PRP

On the ballot, each 1<sup>st</sup>-choice vote counts as a win against all other candidates. Similarly, a 2<sup>nd</sup>-choice vote wins against all candidates except the 1<sup>st</sup> choice. A 3<sup>rd</sup>-choice vote wins against all candidates except the 1<sup>st</sup>-choice and 2<sup>nd</sup>-choice. Ballots with one or two choices marked are acceptable. Once the total number of points for each candidate has been determined, the points are divided by the total number of possible points to determine each candidate's "Condorcet score". The division of each candidate's points by the number of possible points helps to address inconsistencies in voter turnout and riding size that could otherwise lead to over or underrepresentation of one riding in an electoral area. The highest Condorcet score in a riding wins the preferential seat. Once the preferential seats in an electoral area are won, the candidates (who have not won a

preferential seat) can win a proportional seat.

The preferential ballot gives freedom to preferentially choose up to all candidates, and if all candidates are chosen, all but the last choice gain points based on the number of candidates they were chosen ahead of; avoids split votes; elects the most wanted and/or accepted riding candidate; and voters can choose their Party vote for proportional seats separate from their preferential riding vote. In many, perhaps most instances, voters may well endorse their preferred candidate's party. However, in as vast a country as Canada, or the Territory, it is quite possible that a voter may prefer one political party's policies or vision for the nation/territory, but consider a candidate representing another party to be a more EFFECTIVE representative of issues of unique local concern. Ballots with one or two choices marked are acceptable.

For more, see the Ballots on pp. 7 and 8.

### Details of electoral areas and proportional seats

Electoral areas are groups of between 2 and 5 paired ridings (adjacent) plus the same number of proportional seats (between 4 and 10 seats total). Depending on the number of ridings in an electoral area, each fully represented seat represents an equal percentage of the popular vote. For example, if an electoral area has ten seats, each seat represents 10% of the popular vote; if four seats, 25%. In this way, candidates who are not yet elected in their riding can be elected to a proportional seat by the same percentage of votes with the addition of other same Party candidates' votes from the electoral area. The as yet unelected Party candidate with the highest Condorcet score from their Party is elected to the proportional seat. Proportional seats give meaning to the efforts of almost all voters and all candidates. Even when candidates don't win a seat, the candidate, the winning candidate and the voters can see how their efforts helped their elected proportional Member win their Party seat.

### The practical aspects of the PRP system

Election of proportional representatives with a separate ballot for Party choice  
and

Election of preferential representatives with unlimited voting choice for local representation

PRP Condorcet vote counting: There is a separate ballot for the Party vote for proportional seat(s). For preferential riding seats, voters could choose as many candidates as they wish in order of preference, up to the number of candidates. If all choices are not made, the remaining points are shared equally among the unchosen candidates. A valid ballot could even indicate only a least preferred candidate, by marking just one candidate with the number of candidates against the candidate's name (eg "7", in a field of seven candidates). In cases where illegitimate marks are placed beside a candidate, they would be counted as if they were unmarked.

### Sample Ballots

# Preferential Ridings Proportional PRP System (new combination)

**PRP Ballot:** Similar to MMP with additional preferential choice voting for riding candidates, from 1 to all candidates

**NOTE:** This ballot has Two parts:

First, the Party of your choice

Second, the preferential candidate of your choice

**Party Choice**

**Candidate Choice**

<p>Use a "1" to mark Party of your choice to receive your vote for proportional seat(s).</p> <p>Party A . . . . . <u>    </u></p> <p>Party B . . . . . <u>  1  </u></p> <p>Party C . . . . . <u>    </u></p> <p>Party D . . . . . <u>    </u></p>	<p>Choose as many candidates as you want in the order of your choice, using "1" for 1st choice, "2" for 2nd choice and so on until "5" for 5th choice.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Choice</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Points</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Candidate Party A . . . . .</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_4_</td> <td style="text-align: center;">(1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Candidate Party B . . . . .</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_1_</td> <td style="text-align: center;">(4)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Candidate Party C . . . . .</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_3_</td> <td style="text-align: center;">(2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Candidate Party D . . . . .</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_5_</td> <td style="text-align: center;">(0)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Candidate Independent</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_2_</td> <td style="text-align: center;">(3)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>* Write in _____</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">(5)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*Personally wanted representative who is not a registered candidate. (6<sup>th</sup> candidate)            Note: Other choices' values do not change.</p>		Choice	Points	Candidate Party A . . . . .	_4_	(1)	Candidate Party B . . . . .	_1_	(4)	Candidate Party C . . . . .	_3_	(2)	Candidate Party D . . . . .	_5_	(0)	Candidate Independent	_2_	(3)	* Write in _____		(5)
	Choice	Points																				
Candidate Party A . . . . .	_4_	(1)																				
Candidate Party B . . . . .	_1_	(4)																				
Candidate Party C . . . . .	_3_	(2)																				
Candidate Party D . . . . .	_5_	(0)																				
Candidate Independent	_2_	(3)																				
* Write in _____		(5)																				

**Advantages of PRP:**

- Similarity to the present system + use of present riding boundary lines results in easier set up, education, and implementation;
- 1<sup>st</sup> votes for almost all candidates have value and help to elect somebody;
- Illusory majorities with 100% power cannot occur; minority Governments must collaborate effectively and can be held accountable during their term of office;
- preferential ballot avoids split votes; voters can vote effectively with hearts and minds without strategic voting;
- elects the most wanted or accepted riding candidate;
- Representative of voter lives relatively close to voter.
- voter can vote preferentially for as many candidates as they want, from one to all candidates.

**NOTE:** Re. Candidate Choice and votes of equal value. Each candidate gains 1 pt for every time chosen ahead of another candidate. Total value of choices not made on each bal. are split between remaining candidates. Value of riding votes is determined by number of candidates.  $V = n(n-1)/2$   
 Write in = 5 points. This Vote value changes from 10 to  $V = 6(6-1)/2 = \underline{15}$

Development of the Preferential Ridings Proportional system is based on the expressed wants of interested people.

PRP voting would require computerized vote counting.  
 PRP's advantage is that it gives full, fair and equal preferential treatment of each ballot for all voters and all candidates in their riding.

**Disadvantages:**

- Ridings are twice as large as present FPTP ridings

<b>PRP A I R test:</b>	<b>Accept it as is</b>	<b>Improve it</b>	<b>Replace it</b>
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## How PRP Election Results Are Determined

The political party total vote in each electoral area determines the popular vote of each Party in all electoral areas. The popular vote determines the number of seats for each Party in that electoral area.

The goal of PRP is to give representation to as many votes as possible. The percentage of votes value of each seat in an electoral area is determined by the number of seats in the electoral area: 4 seats – each seat represents 25% of votes; 6 seats – 16 2/3%; 8 seats – 12 1/2%; 10 seats – 10%. The process for distribution of proportional seats is to:

1. Subtract the value of each party's riding seats from their popular vote
2. Distribute fully supported seats to the parties that have the required percent of unrepresented 1<sup>st</sup> choice votes and subtract
3. Distribute any remaining seats to the party(s) with the most unrepresented votes
4. Preferential voting allows the possibility of all votes to have an effect on the election results

## You may find the following video, questions and charts enlightening

"Do you want your vote to count?" (5 minute video)

<https://goo.gl/NLIVbg>

Do you know how Government justifies not fixing the electoral system? (Past Governments)

**I don't! - Past Government has not represented Yukoners!**

The former Yukon Party illusory majority Government of Yukon represented 27% of votes cast in the election.

54% of votes elected nobody. **This is not democracy!**

The former Yukon Party Government Members all agreed that the way to deal with electoral change was to refuse to discuss it and they did refuse. **Thankfully, Yukon Party is no longer Government.**

The new Liberal Governments said that they will fix the system. For change to happen, Canadians need to remind our MPs and Yukoners need to remind our MLAs what they promised. Have you expressed your concern to your MP and MLA?

# Comparison of election results Present FPTP to PRP systems in Yukon and

## How Proportional Seats Are Won - PRP System in Whitehorse Electoral Area 2011

Whitehorse, Yukon Election Results  
First-Past-The-Post (FPTP)

Yukon would have 3 electoral areas: South Yukon (4), Whitehorse (10),  
North Yukon (4), Vuntut Gwitchin (1)

Whitehorse electoral area  
10 Riding seats

### 2011 Results

#### CURRENT FIRST PAST THE POST (FPTP)

#### Effective Votes – Voters Represented

	Yukon P	Liberal	NDP	Total
Popular Votes	40.4%	25.9%	32.5%	
<b>Total Votes and Seats</b>	<b>8,842</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Effective Votes cast</b>	<b>2,743</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1363</b>	<b>46.4%</b>

#### PROPOSED “PREFERENTIAL RIDINGS PROPORTIONAL” (PRP)

10 Seats total

Split to 5 paired riding seats + 5 proportional seats

Each seat would represent 10% of Votes Cast

Parties	Yukon P	Liberal	NDP	Other
Popular Votes	40.4%	25.90%	32.50%	1.20%
# Paired ridings	3	0	2	0
Representation VALUE	30%	0	20%	0
Unrepresented votes	10.4%	25.9%	12.5%	1.20%
Fully supported seats	1	2	1	
Unrepresented votes remaining	.40%	5.90%	2.50%	1.20%
Partially supported PR seat		1		
<b>Total seats</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Effective Votes Cast</b>				<b>95.9%</b>

#### RESULT OF PRP

Liberals won 0 seats with the current system

Liberals would have had 3 proportional seats with PRP

**46.4% Effective with FPTP or 95.9% Effective with PRP**

***“PRP Seems to make a lot of sense to us”***

TRUE DEMOCRACY DEMANDS  
EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION OF THE VOTERS  
2011 FAILED DEMOCRACY in YUKON

# 2006 and 2008 Canadian Federal Results Comparisons

2006 Federal Election Results: Current First Past the FPTP VERSUS PRP

Post FPTP Voting System Compared to the new

Preferential Ridings Proportional PRP Voting System

19 examined electoral areas (138 seats) 6,689,439 Voters

## 2006 Results

Value of 1 seat = 0.72% of Votes Cast

Effective Votes – Voters Represented  
From Across Canada

Parties	B. Quebec	Conserv	Green	Liberal	NDP
Popular Vote	8.93%	32.42%	4.62%	35.23%	17.18%

### Current FIRST PAST THE POST – Distribution of Seats/Votes

Parties	B. Que	Conserv.	Green	Liberal	NDP
Total Seats 138	16	44	0	59	12
% Seats	11.59%	31.88%	0.00	42.75%	8.70%
<b>Effective Voters</b>	380,656	1,261,930	0	1,590,280	264,766
<b>3,497,632</b> out of 6,689,439					
% Effective votes					<b>52.3%</b>

### New PREFERENTIAL RIDING PROPORTIONAL–Distribution of Effective votes

Parties	B. Que.	Conserv.	Green	Liberal	NDP
Total seats 138	13	47	04	48	26
% Seats	9.42%	34.06%	2.90%	34.78%	18.84%
<b>Effective Voters</b>					
<b>6,125,417</b> out of 6,689,439	594,408	2,132,887	98,280	2,230,092	1,069,751
% Effective Votes					<b>91.6%</b>

**52.3% effective with FPTP or 91.6% effective with PRP**

**“PRP makes a lot of sense to us”**

TRUE DEMOCRACY DEMANDS  
EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION OF THE VOTERS  
2006 FAILED EMOCRACY

**2008 Federal Election Results: Current First Past the FPTP VERSUS PRP  
 Post FPTP Voting System Compared to the new  
 Preferential Ridings Proportional PRP Voting System  
 19 examined electoral areas (138 seats) 6,689,439 Voters**

**2008 Results**

Value of 1 seat = 0.72% of Votes Cast

**Effective Votes – Voters Represented**

Parties	B. Que.	Conserv.	Green	Liberal	NDP
Popular Vote	8.17%	35.21%	6.60%	31.61%	17.50%

**Current FIRST PAST THE POST – Distribution of Seats/votes**

Parties	B. Que.	Conserv.	Green	Liberal	NDP
Seats	15	49	0	53	13
% Seats	10.87%	35.51%	0.00%	38.41%	9.42%
Effective Voters	327,696	1,358,019	0	1,223,437	286,203
3,195,355 out of 6,289,728					
E. Votes					50.8%

**New PREFERENTIAL RIDING PROPORTIONAL - Distribution of Effective  
 Seats/votes**

Parties	B. Que	Conserv.	Green	Liberal	NDP
Seats	12	48	09	43	26
% Seats	8.70%	34.78%	6.52%	31.16%	18.84%
E. Voters	513,564	2,110,355	307,075	1,860,786	1,039,328
5,831,108 out of 6,289,728					
E. Votes					92.7%

**50.8% effective with FPTP or 92.7% effective with PRP**

**“PRP makes a lot of sense to us”**

**TRUE DEMOCRACY DEMANDS  
 EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION OF THE VOTERS  
 2008 FAILED DEMOCRACY**

## Only 3 additional federal seats are required for PR throughout Canada, but . . .

Only 3 additional proportional seats would be required for the PRP system to provide proportional representation in all provinces and territories in Canada. However, this proposal is to give those additional seats to an area that is already over represented population wise at this time. The area is very under represented though, when geographical area is considered.

As you may know, Canada's 3 northern territories make up a very extensive and valuable part of Canada. Many Canadians living south of 60 degrees latitude as well as international visitors place a high value on Northern Canada. The three northern territories presently have their own independent governments that function on the same level as provincial governments. They make up 2/5 of Canada's land mass.

If northern Canada, (Nunavut, North West Territories, and Yukon), were to be formed into an electoral area with its present 3 riding seats plus 3 additional proportional seats, Northern Canada could have representation of almost all votes. Like Southern Canada, Northern Canada could have 3 or possibly 4 political parties connected to the resident people, representing them in Parliament. Present communication systems could make this functional.

This Federal proposal is based on a 1977 solution to a similar problem in the Yukon:

Before 1977, due to its low population, the Vuntut Gwitchin (VG) First Nation were in a riding with part of Dawson City whose population was larger than the VG community. The VG knew the large North Yukon land mass and made their living on it. They had expressed their concern about not being represented in the Yukon Legislature over several years.

In 1977, the Yukon Boundaries Commission established the separate VG riding on a trial basis. This inclusive change made such a difference, the Vuntut Gwitchin riding was established on a permanent basis. Following is a statement from the most recent Boundaries Commission report:

*"The Commission recognizes Vuntut Gwitchin is the least populated electoral district in the Yukon. We propose that it remain a separate electoral district. . . "*

Just as Vuntut Gwitchin's unique position in the Yukon meant it deserved a special voice, so does the unique situation of the territories within Canada also merit special consideration in the national electoral system.

These 3 additional seats would result in significantly balanced awareness and perspective on Canada's North, but would have only insignificant power change in Parliament.

## Conclusion

It is our belief that this Preferential Ridings Proportional system is a fairer though more complex system than the present First Past the Post. However, PRP results in more truly representative democracy, and we believe that Canadians are capable of understanding and using it. The PRP system would have a resultant positive effect on community building governance, as well as election effectiveness described below.

### NOTE:

This voting system would require careful definition before implementation.

Electronic vote counting is highly recommended, with paper ballots for possible recounts.

## PRP Effect on Community Building Governance

Democracy is meant to build inclusive community in which citizens feel empowerment and belonging. The present electoral system in Canada divides communities by only representing the votes of half the voters in the governing body, those who voted for their riding winner. Some voters for all political parties are not represented under the present First Past the Post (FPTP) system.

Illusory majority governments, representing one Party, elected under the FPTP system need not be transparent or accountable during their term of governance because majority Governments have 100% voting power in the House. When all votes count, illusory majority governments don't happen.

It doesn't have to be that way. Almost all votes in general elections could count with a system change.

Canadians should consider when transparency and accountability are most valuable - during a term of governance or when the term of governance is over? 'When the term is over', is called retrospective voting.

*"This topic is dealt with extensively by C.H. Achen & L.M. Bartels in "Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government". The analysis in A & B's book covers a century of U.S. elections, and how retrospective voting has affected government policies over time is disturbing". (Andre Carrel)*

Achen & Bartels in conclusion to chapter 5, "Blind Retrospection":

*"Democracies take their electoral direction from human beings with limited capacities for self-government. Human passions remain powerful, and human understanding remains weak. Under sufficient pressure, voters sometimes lash out blindly. Such events are not quaint historical footnotes rendered irrelevant by modern education and hygiene. Indeed, in just the past century many citizens - and many prominent intellectuals - have been enthusiastic supporters of Nazis, Bolsheviks, Mao's Communist guerillas, and a host of other brutal demagogues whose policies seemed to offer attractive solutions to fundamental social problems that the previous incumbent rulers had failed to master."*

(The book was published in 2016 (Princeton University Press), but it

obviously had to be written prior to Trump's ascendancy.)

We don't need to look outside Canada or far back to see the destructive effects of retrospective voting in Canada's own governance. For effective governance, governments must function collaboratively and be held accountable during their term of office. Proportional representation through an effective electoral system, can make transparency and accountability happen in governance by stopping illusory majority governments.

*“The principle role of political parties not represented in government under FPTP is one of “Her Majesty’s Loyal Opposition”. It is to oppose whatever government is attempting to do, to make government look bad in the hope of generating a throw the bums out mood among voters. When no single party has the strength to control the legislative body, when government needs the support of at least two, perhaps three parties to enact a program or legislation, the challenge for any political party in the assembly is to develop proposals to deal with problems. In other words, the incentive for all political parties is to make a good impression on voters more than to make the government look bad. With proportional representation the role for all political parties, across the spectrum, is broadened to one of engagement and participation rather than narrower role of opposition – be that loyal or self-serving”. (Andre Carrel)*

As Bob Cameron of Whitehorse suggested, a name change could also help. Instead of “Opposition”, why not something like “Alternative” if other ways are seen as a solution. Collaborative governance,

When votes are not fairly represented, those voters often use petitions, protests and/or court to be heard, the only options they have. Those processes are very dysfunctional, being costly in time, project efficiency, money and in feeling of community. When citizens feel empowerment, and belonging in a community, it is far easier for the governing body to govern the community effectively for the overall benefit of the represented community. Almost all votes counting in elections can greatly increase those very important feelings of belonging and community.

When almost all votes count in elections, illusory majority governments do not occur. Minority governments, which require collaboration for governance, would take their place. Minority governments elected under an effective electoral system like PRP should work very effectively in an inclusive and balanced manner and run full term through effective collaboration. Leaders would be effective collaborators.

If a minority Government is seen as refusing to collaborate and the Opposition calls an election, it would probably lose its Government position following the election.

If Opposition is seen as refusing to collaborate and unjustly brings Government down, Government could win the next election with a true majority.

## PRP Effect on Elections

Preferential voting in elections could result in more respectful and friendly debates because second and third choice votes from supporters of other candidates would often be needed for a candidate to be elected. Successful candidates would be more respectful and focussed on issues.

Proportional systems of counting the votes are more representative than the present First Past the Post system. At this time, I'm not aware of a system that has ever managed to sidestep the problem of inclusion as effectively as the combination Preferential Ridings Proportional, PRP system. Every person who comes out to vote in a PRP election would have a very high probability of being able to point to an elected Member whom his/her 1<sup>st</sup> choice vote helped to elect. If not their 1<sup>st</sup> choice, possibly their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice. They can say with confidence, "I made a difference. My vote mattered. I can discuss my governance concerns with this representative whom I have elected."

Adopting PRP would allow Canada or Yukon to leave a legacy to the world. No other country has put forth a combination electoral system that addresses the concerns of its people as completely and connected as PRP would in electing our representatives. PRP was built in Canada by Yukon Canadians to build inclusive community into governance for both our present and future lives. Seven generations, as First Nations say.

It has been shown that the PRP system is definitely more democratically inclusive than the present system. PRP includes the good parts of several systems including the present system's connectivity. Once the system is changed and tried, it can be given the AIR test - Accept, Improve or Replace.

It's time for Canadians to feel engaged and empowered with our electoral process. It's time for our Government to be tied to our communities and everyone in them. It's time for all of us to be heard and feel a sense of belonging and empowerment.

"It's time for change. We can do that now. It's not just our right. For the sake of the future and all the people to come, it's our responsibility. The time for change is now." Jim Borisenko.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFduzUbv4ZE&feature=youtu.be>

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Thank you, Andre Carrel, for the supporting information and encouragement to keep at it. Thank you to Sue Greetham for promoting PRP and Dave Nash, for adding the very important 'equality of votes' to reduce the motivation for strategic voting. Voters will be able to vote very effectively using all the choices they want with this combination Preferential Ridings Proportional (PRP) system, voting with their hearts and minds. Thanks to Fair Vote Canada and Fair Vote Yukon, also to five others who played a major roll in PRP's development - Ted Dean, Bill Mills, Marlene Rusk, Heather Rusk, and Pierre Morvan.

If this PRP system helps make inclusive and truly representative democracy happen in Canada and Yukon, I will have many to thank for their help with my crazy 11 year quest that I initially thought would

only take months to complete. My quest began in 2005 while serving on an Elections Canada committee giving grassroots feedback on proposals from across Canada to increase voter turnout. Initially I was shocked at the first meeting when one RO angrily said, "*What are we looking at this stuff for? Why aren't we looking at the voting system?*" We were told that it was a political question that Elections Canada couldn't discuss. I initially couldn't believe that anyone could make such a statement. What could be better? Under FPTP, the candidate with the most votes wins the seat and the party with the most seats becomes Government to execute the laws passed in Parliament. Many today are like I was.

Evenings is when I learned why Canadians should be looking at and improving our electoral system. Fair Vote Canada was formally organized and has been working on the problem since 2000. Lead Now and the Council of Canadians have played major roles in this needed change. I'm confident that there are several other groups that I'm not aware of who have realized and joined the move for change.

Prime Minister Trudeau promised change and fairness in elections. Yukon's Premier Sandy Silver has done likewise. The number of people aware of Canada's need for change continues to grow.

After using proportional representation in two elections, New Zealanders voted strongly to keep it.

Do you know of a system that would be more effective and easier to implement on a trial basis than PRP? If you do, please send it to me. At this time, I'm not aware of one.

Thanks again,

Dave Brekke, very concerned former Federal Returning Officer (RO) for Yukon

## Executive Summary

### DEMOCRACY IN CANADA

#### *Why the concern?*

*Video - 5 minutes – "Do you want your vote to count?"* <https://goo.gl/NLlVbg>

1 Canada's current, "First-Past-The-Post" electoral system (FPTP) has often resulted in election of governments that represent the needs, wants and values of less than half of the voters.

2 Probably because of this, the system has disengaged Canadian voters to such a degree that in the last federal election, only 61% of eligible Canadians voted. (Elections Canada, 2011).

3 The Preferential Ridings Proportional (PRP) system proposed here would make Canada a more inclusive and representative democracy. PRP would allow almost every vote cast in an election to have some impact on the resultant legislative body.

4 PRP is a hybrid system that incorporates elements from Canada's present riding-based system, but includes both preferential voting, and proportional representation.

5 The development of the PRP system is based on what people interested in improving our electoral system said they wanted in a new system.

6 The PRP system reorganizes the country, province or territory into ridings roughly twice the size of our current ridings, each electing a single representative using preferential voting.

7 The other half of the representatives will be elected to Proportional Seats to give representation to voters who did not vote for the winner in their riding.

8 The allocation of proportional seats will reflect relative popularity of the Parties in geographically coherent "Electoral Areas." The proportional representatives will be usually the most successful unelected candidates from their Political Party within the electoral area.

9 The effect of the allocation of proportional representatives will be a parliamentary distribution of seats that fairly represents the distribution of political opinion among voters.

## Appendix: Whitehorse Fireweed Market Mock Election, 2013

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Jim Borisenko, in 5 minute video with song by Nicole Edwards, *Do You Want Your Vote to Count?* Filmed and produced by Phil Timpany of Wildman Productions and directed by Sally Wright, artist/activist. <https://goo.gl/NLIVbg>