2016

Who Votes for Mayor?

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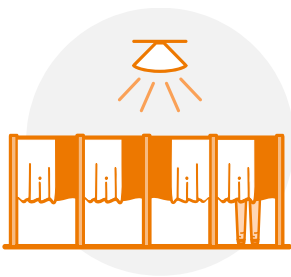*Portland State University*

Citation Details

WHO VOTES FOR MAYOR?

Too few people choose our local leaders

Voter turnout is shockingly low in elections for mayor and other local officials across the United States. For the most recent round of mayoral elections in America's 30 largest cities, turnout of eligible citizens in 15 of them was less than 20%.
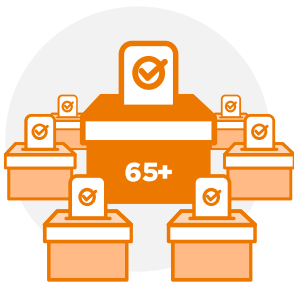
Low voter turnout is a problem in cities across the country

Reserchers at Portland State University analyzed 23 million voting records to understand who voted in the most recent local elections in 50 U.S. cities. Here's what they discovered:
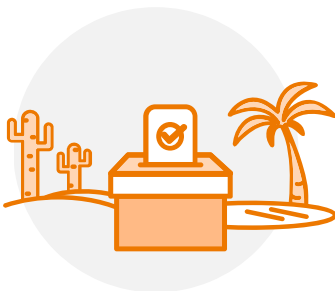
TURNOUT IS ABYSMALLY LOW
Turnout in 10 of America's 30 largest cities was less than 15%. In Las Vegas, Fort Worth, and Dallas, turnout was in the single digits.

THE MEDIAN AGE OF VOTERS WAS 57
Nearly a generation older than the median age of eligible voters. City residents 65 and older were 15 times more likely to cast a ballot than younger residents between the ages of 18 and 34.

TURNOUT VARIES DRAMATICALLY AMONG NEIGHBORHOODS
Voting "oases" and "deserts" are the norm. For example, more than 1 in 5 residents of Columbia, South Carolina live in voting deserts, areas where turnout is half (or less) than the citywide average.

Turnout of eligible voters in most recent mayoral election: 30 largest cities

Turnout	City
59.4%	PORTLAND
45.4%	LOUISVILLE
44.5%	SEATTLE
32.7%	CHICAGO
32.1%	SAN DIEGO
32.1%	SAN FRANCISCO
30.9%	JACKSONVILLE
30.7%	SAN JOSE
29.7%	BOSTON
29.7%	COLUMBUS, OH
25.1%	DETROIT
24%	PHILADELPHIA
23.8%	NASHVILLE
22.6%	DENVER
20.2%	MEMPHIS
20%	MEDIAN
19.8%	WASHINGTON DC
18.6%	LOS ANGELES
18.2%	HOUSTON
15.9%	CHARLOTTE
15.4%	PHOENIX
14.8%	BALTIMORE
13.8%	NEW YORK CITY
13.3%	AUSTIN
12%	MIAMI
11.6%	EL PASO
11.6%	OKLAHOMA CITY
10.7%	SAN ANTONIO
9.4%	LAS VEGAS
6.5%	FORT WORTH
6.1%	DALLAS

Explore the data: Visit whovotesformayor.org for an in-depth look at who's voting in local elections in cities around the country, including maps comparing voter turnout with factors like age, race, and education.