

Don't be Fooled by the Primary Results: Mayoral Races in St. Paul and Minneapolis Remain Wide Open

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Chris Coleman's lopsided victory over the incumbent mayor, Randy Kelly, in the St. Paul primary on September 13th has created the mistaken impression that a major upset is on the way. The electorate on November will be much larger and quite a bit different. Similar caution should be used in the Minneapolis election after Mayor R.T. Rybak's victory over Peter McLaughlin.

Turnout May Triple in the St. Paul Mayoral Election

In St. Paul's primary race, Coleman received twice as many votes as Kelly: 13,041 votes (51.5%) for Coleman versus 6,740 (26.6%) for Kelly. The challenger's win and, especially, his margin of victory were a genuine surprise.

The reality, however, is that **only a small proportion of voters turned out for the St. Paul mayoral primary – 15.54% of the 162,873 voters** who were already registered to vote or registered on primary day.

About three times as many voters are likely to turnout for the November St. Paul mayoral election. During the past three general elections in St Paul mayoral races, turnout has ranged from just under 40% to nearly 43% of registered voters. If the patterns in recent mayoral contests remain, turnout for the November general election is likely to rise to approximately 70,000 voters from the 25,303 who cast a ballot in the September primary.

Turnout in St. Paul Mayoral Elections, 1993-2001

<u>Year of Election</u>	<u>Turnout</u>
1993	42.88%
1997	41.58%
2001	39.72%

Turnout may reach the highest level in a dozen years because of the competitiveness of this year's race and the large amounts of money spent on the campaign.

Minneapolis Mayoral Race Will See Much Higher Turnout

Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak's 9 percentage point win over Peter McLaughlin (44.5% versus 35.3%) was also based on a fairly low turnout. Turnout was limited to the 14.54% of the 230,829 voters who were already registered to vote or registered on primary day.

Turnout in November is likely to be three times higher. As many as 46% of registered voters in Minneapolis have turned out to vote during the past three mayoral races. If past patterns hold, about 106,000 votes will be cast in November as compared to the 33,558 votes cast during the recent September primary.

Turnout in Minneapolis Mayoral Elections, 1993-2001

<u>Year of Election</u>	<u>Turnout</u>
1993	44.92%
1997	45.94%
2001	39.71%