

Empowering Ramsey County Voters

Recommendations for Increasing Voter Participation

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to DiscoverSM

Defining Goals

Goals: Increase countywide voter participation to 300,000 by the 2020 election with an extended goal of reaching 75% participation by 2028.

Progress: In 2018 total participation reached 247,050 with 58.1% turnout.

Current Resources: Voter Handbook, online voting location finder, key dates, early voting information (including multi lingual details)

Focus of County Strategies (From Department Summary)

1. Partner with local community organizations to remove barriers for voting and by focusing on outreach efforts on areas with traditionally low voter turnout.
2. Develop a communication and marketing plan for voter education to improve the quality and content of election-related information available to the voters.

Informed by Previous Research

Resilient Communities selected findings:

POL 1914: Increase perspective voter engagement by the county and candidates/public officials; improved voter access to those running for office

PA 8081: Investment in community partnerships for voter education (advocacy committee)

Foundational Principles of Proposals

- Need to create material that is salient, concise, and easy to digest
- Recognition that organizations and campaigns are regularly interacting with perspective voters
- Understanding that those using new resources would need to be part of the design process

Interviews

Interviewed: commissioners, legislators, senators, councilmembers, and community organizers.

Questions focused on the following premises

- 1) When you are speaking with constituents what conversations do you have around voting (if any)?
- 2) What material (if any) would be useful for you to have that is not already available from the county.
- 3) What are the most important areas of voter education (survey)

Common Themes from Interviews

- Need for voter “education” ranges throughout the county.
- Voter education is not always the priority - does not mitigate the need for easy to distribute voter information.
- Created information must be accessible in multiple languages
- Resources need to be easy to carry
- Lack of knowledge on the role various elected officials play amongst constituents
- Balancing act between time commitments of new voter outreach and turning out identified voters.

Survey Content

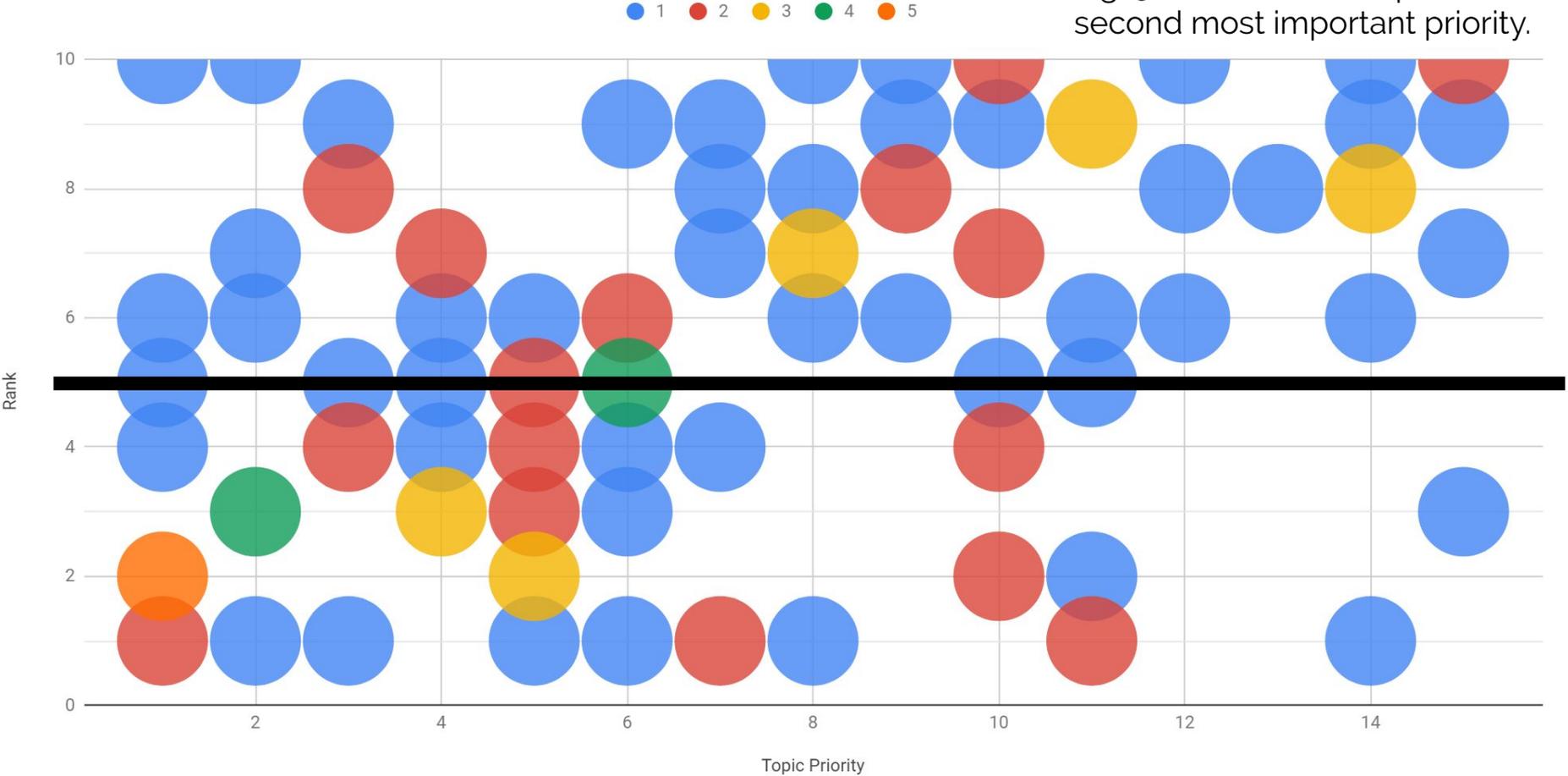
Identified target areas based on established topics and those recommended

Please Rank top 10 voting topic priorities (1 being most important) that you feel need to be included in a future voter pocket guide and canvassing material.

- Voter Eligibility Requirements
- Voter Rights
- Time off to Vote
- Voting on Election Day
- Early Voting Information
- Voting by Mail
- Civic information on Government (Why vote)
- RCV information
- How to contact current representation
- Voter Registration Deadline/Requirements
- Voting Location Guide
- Voting while in nursing home or hospital
- Voting while overseas
- Voting with criminal record
- Voting while experiencing homelessness
- Other: _____
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

Survey Results

Color= # of votes for that rank
E.g. 5 voters ranked topic 1 their second most important priority.



Translating Data

Of top 5 rankings

Early Voting Information

Voting Eligibility Requirements

Voting by Mail

Voting Registration Deadlines

Voter Rights

Voting On Election Day

Voting Location Guide

Time off to Vote

Civic Information

RCV information

Identifying Solutions 1 of 4

Pocket voter handbook: 10 to 15 page document 3x5 in rough sized. Designed as a conversation piece to be used by community organizations during outreach. Would include:

- 10 to 15 key voter information as identified through survey data
- Room for notes
- Option for district/ward map and information or insert

Starting template can be found at: [ElectionTools.org](https://www.electiontools.org)

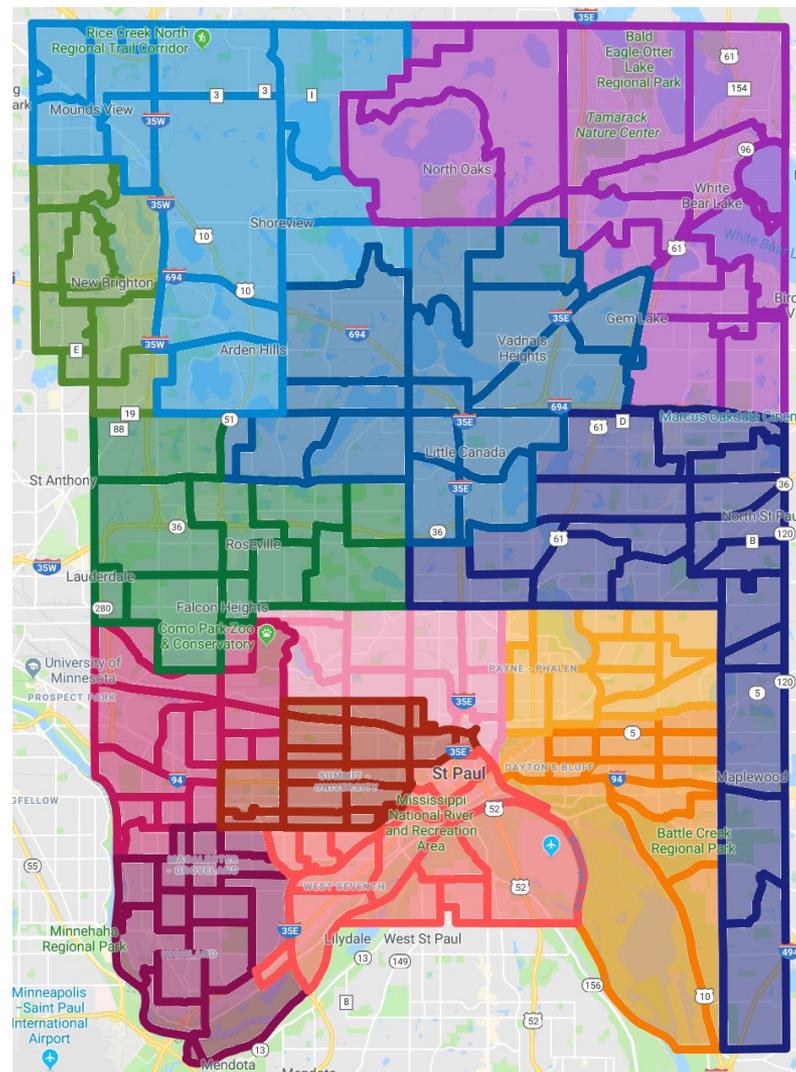
Identifying Solutions 2 of 4

Canvassing voter guide: Sized and printed on traditional 7x11 card or hanger. Designed campaigns to be handed out while speaking with constituents.

Would include:

- Map of voting area that would include voting information by precinct.
 - St Paul : Ward Maps
 - Suburban Communities: Legislative Districts
 - Examples on following slides
- 3-5 key voter information as identified through survey data

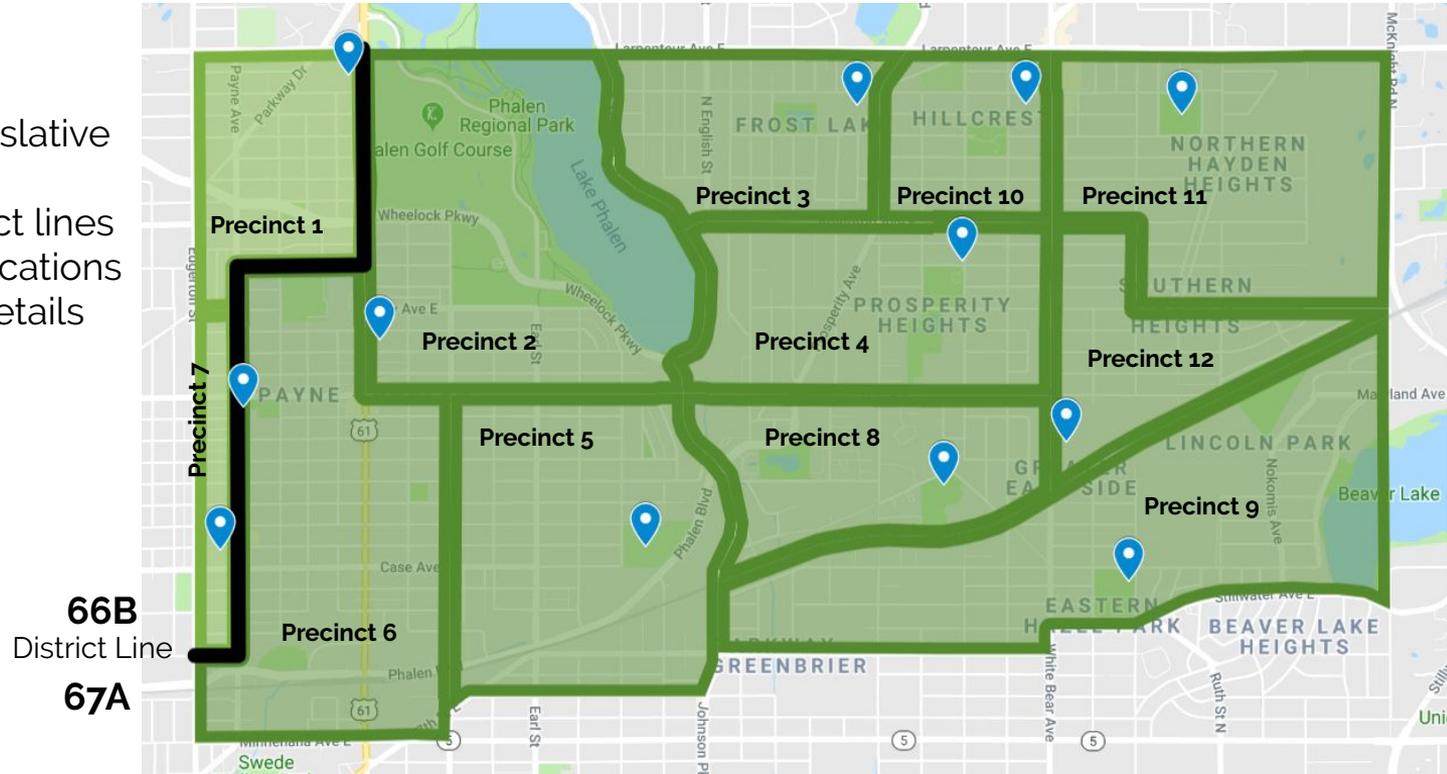
County Overview



Ward 6 Example

Features:

1. Labeled Wards
2. Color coded legislative districts
3. Legislative district lines
4. Drop pin voter locations
5. Key with Ward details



Ward 4 Example

Features:

1. Labeled Wards
2. Color coded legislative districts
3. Legislative district lines
4. Drop pin voter locations
 - a. Cross ward locations identified
5. Key with Ward details

Precinct 1 Langford Recreation Center
30 Langford Park

Precinct 2 Luther Seminary
1501 Fulham Street

Precinct 3 Seal High Rise
825 Seal Street

Precinct 4 & 5 Merriam Park Recreation Center
2000 St. Anthony Ave

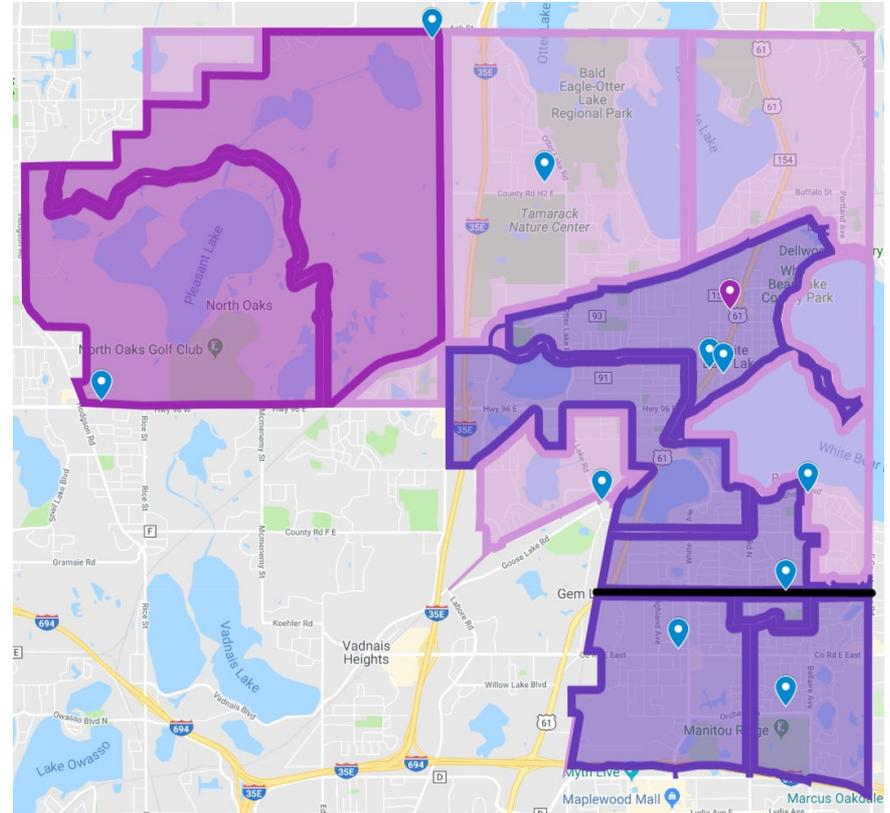
66A
District Line
64A



White Bear Lake Area

Features:

1. Labeled Wards
2. Color coded by city/township
3. Legislative district lines
4. Drop pin voter locations
5. Key with precinct (ward) details



WBL Area

North Oaks:

Precinct 1: North Oaks City Hall

100 Village Center Drive

Precinct 2: Waverly Gardens

5919 Centerville Road

White Bear Lake:

Ward 1: White Bear Lake City Hall

4701 Highway 61

Ward 2: White Bear Lake Library

2150 2nd Street

Ward 3: Sunrise Park Middle School

2399 Cedar Ave

Ward 4: Goldview Building

2449 Orchard Lane

Ward 5: St. Stephen Lutheran Church

1965 County Road E E

White Bear Township:

Precinct 1: Otter Lake Elementary School

1401 County Road H2 E

Precinct 2: Lakeshore Players Theater

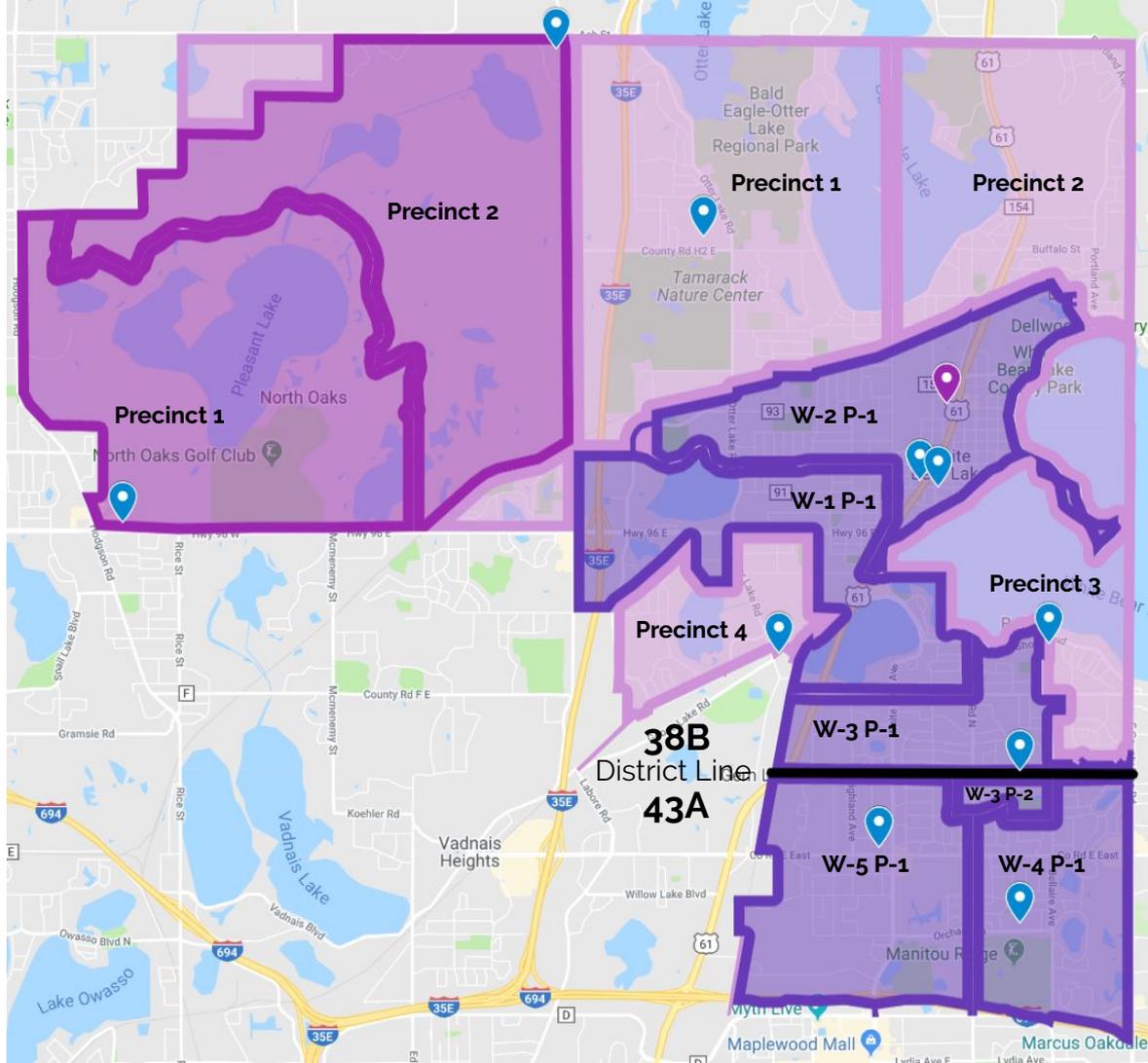
4941 Long Ave

Precinct 3: South Shore Trinity Lutheran Church

2480 South Shore Boulevard

Precinct 4: Heritage Hall

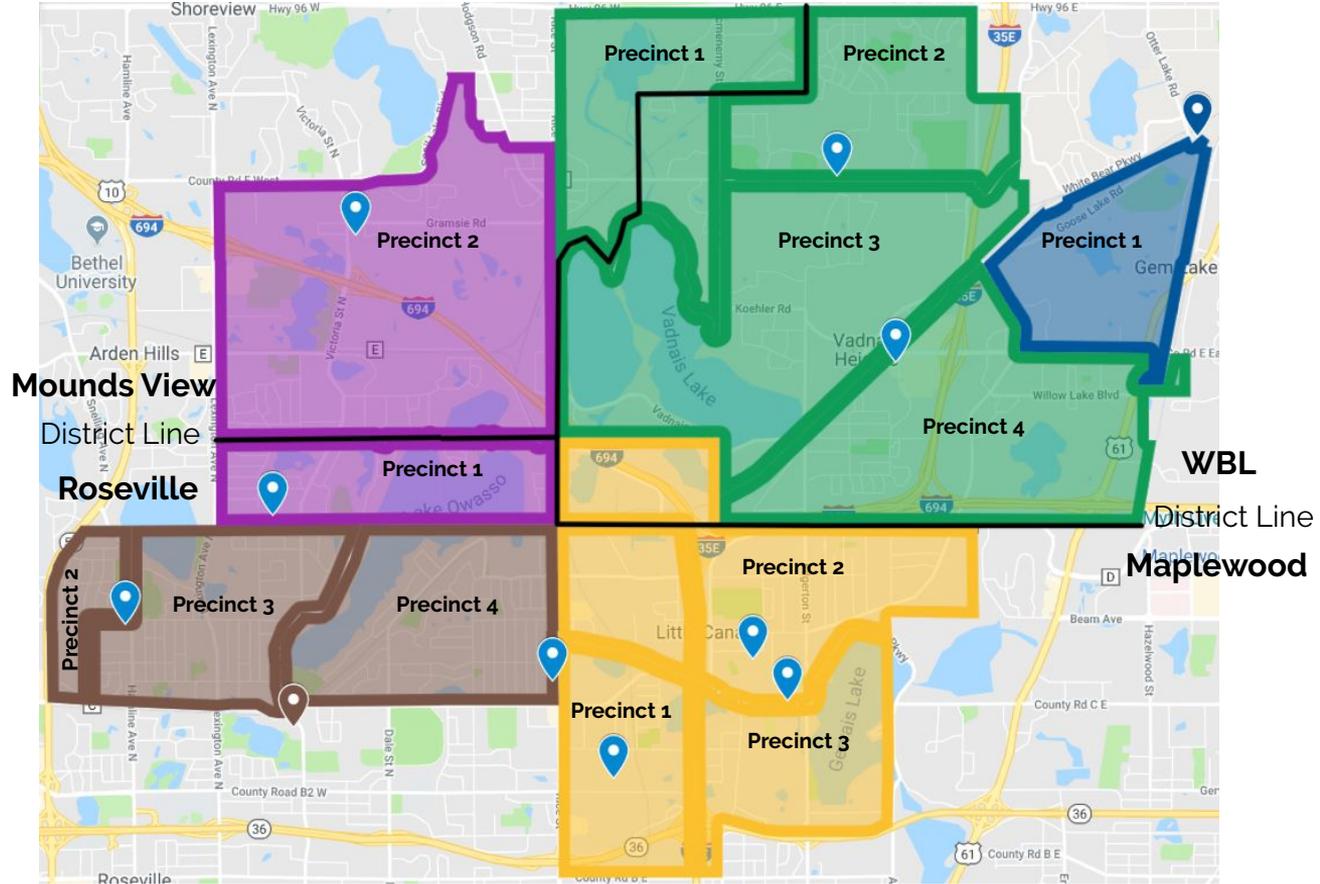
4200 Otter Lake Road



MN House 42B

Features:

1. Labeled Wards
2. Color coded by city
3. School District Lines
4. Drop pin voter locations
5. Key with precinct details

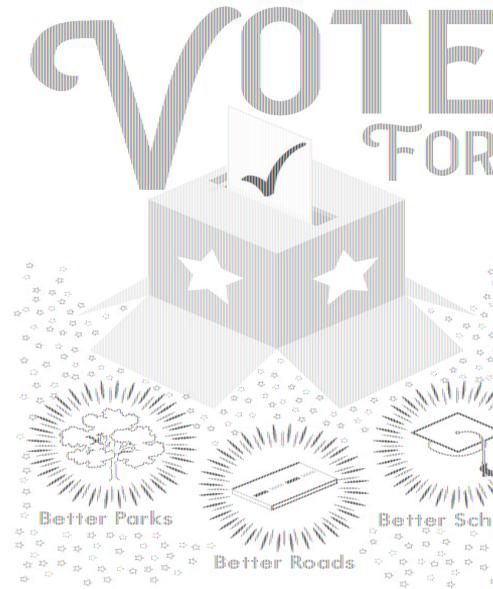
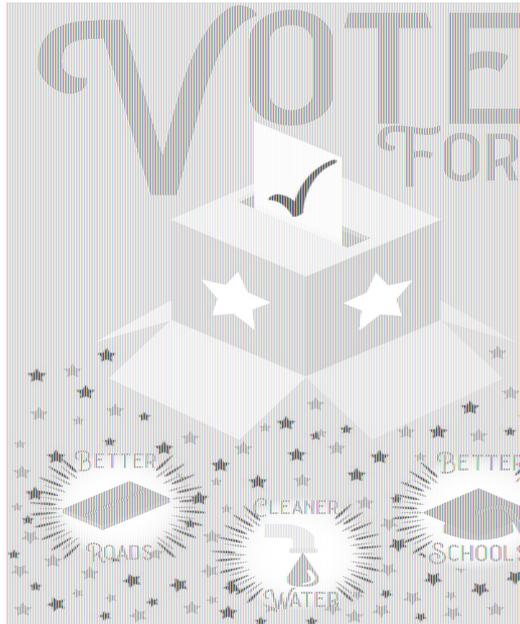


Identifying Solutions 3 of 4

Centralized online voting information: Designed to be a one-stop shop for designers to quickly find important information they need to create their organization or candidates online/print information: Information could include:

- Important dates (city/township specific)
- Voter Registration information
- Early voting/absentee information including hours for in person voting
- FAQs
- County designed information for easy implementation in literature or web

Visual Campaign 4 of 4



Measuring Success

To ensure that solutions are meeting the needs of constituent organizations and candidates an assessment of any material is recommended.

Key areas:

- Were resources utilized? How?
- What was missing?
- What can be removed?

Areas of Continued Research

Interview a pool of unelected candidates

Due to election calendar and time constraints, unelected candidates were not interviewed. A candidate's perspective would offer additional perspective in creating a rounded pocket guide and canvassing material

Interview a larger pool of community organizers and activists

Due to time constraints and summer schedule, it was difficult to get a large sample of this group. Additional conversation would yield more data points for how pocket guide would be implemented.

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