

Evolution of Design in Elections

Good design and clear language makes
a better election experience

EAC Roundtable discussion
August 11, 2011

Whitney Quesenbery
Usability in Civic Life Project



Twitter
@whitneyq
#BReady2012



photo from Susan King Roth "Disenfranchised by Design" ID Journal, 1998

Design, plain language, and usability all start with people

A good voting experience takes

- Good design
- Clear information
- Easy to understand interaction

All working together!



**How far have
we come?**

Chicago judicial retention ballot

JUDICIAL RETENTION – CIRCUIT COURT
(RETENCION JUDICIAL – CORTE DE CIRCUITO)

Shall **CAROLE KAMIN BELLOWES** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería CAROLE KAMIN BELLOWES ser retenida en su puesto como JUEZ DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK? **YES 229 →**
NO 231 →

Shall **DAVID G. LICHTENSTEIN** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería DAVID G. LICHTENSTEIN ser retenido en su puesto como JUEZ DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK? **YES 233 →**
NO 235 →

Shall **MICHAEL J. HOGAN** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería MICHAEL J. HOGAN ser retenido en su puesto como JUEZ DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK? **YES 237 →**
NO 239 →

Shall **ALAN J. GREIMAN** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería ALAN J. GREIMAN ser retenido en su puesto como JUEZ DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK? **YES 241 →**
NO 243 →

Shall **MARY MAXWELL THOMAS** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería MARY MAXWELL THOMAS ser retenida en su puesto como JUEZA DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK? **YES 245 →**
NO 246 →

Shall **FRANCIS BARTH** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería FRANCIS BARTH ser retenido en su puesto como JUEZ DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK? **YES 249 →**
NO 250 →

Shall **STUART ALLEN NUDELMAN** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería STUART ALLEN NUDELMAN ser retenido en su puesto como JUEZ DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK? **YES 253 →**
NO 254 →

Shall **EDWARD R. BURR** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería EDWARD R. BURR ser retenido en su puesto como JUEZ DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK? **YES 257 →**
NO 258 →

Shall **BARBARA J. DISKO** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería BARBARA J. DISKO ser retenida en su puesto como JUEZA DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK? **YES 261 →**
NO 262 →

JUDICIAL RETENTION – CIRCUIT COURT
(RETENCION JUDICIAL – CORTE DE CIRCUITO)

← **230 YES** Shall **KATHY M. FLANAGAN** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería KATHY M. FLANAGAN ser retenida en su puesto como JUEZ DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK?
← **232 NO**

← **234 YES** Shall **CURTIS HEASTON** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería CURTIS HEASTON ser retenido en su puesto como JUEZ DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK?
← **236 NO**

← **238 YES** Shall **MICHAEL J. KELLY** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería MICHAEL J. KELLY ser retenido en su puesto como JUEZ DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK?
← **240 NO**

← **242 YES** Shall **JOHN E. MORRISSEY** be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT? ¿Debería JOHN E. MORRISSEY ser retenido en su puesto como JUEZ DE LA CORTE DE CIRCUITO, CIRCUITO JUDICIAL DEL CONDADO DE COOK?

JUDICIAL RETENTION CIRCUIT COURT
RETENCION JUDICIAL CORTE DE CIRCUITO

vote yes or no
voto si o no

YES: Retain the candidate in office as Judge of the Circuit Court, Cook County Judicial Circuit.

YES: Retenga al candidato en su puesto como Juez De La Corte De Circuito, Circuito Judicial Del Condado De Cook.

NO: Don't retain the candidate in office as Judge of the Circuit Court, Cook County Judicial Circuit.

NO: No retenga al candidato en su puesto como Juez De La Corte De Circuito, Circuito Judicial Del Condado De Cook.

Official Ballot
Balota Oficial

JUDICIAL RETENTION CIRCUIT COURT
RETENCION JUDICIAL CORTE DE CIRCUITO

← **231 YES** **Kathy M. Flanagan**
← **232 NO**

← **235 YES** **Curtis Heaston**
← **236 NO**

← **239 YES** **Michael J. Kelly**
← **240 NO**

← **243 YES** **John E. Morrissey**
← **244 NO**

← **247 YES** **Ronald C. Riley**
← **248 NO**

← **251 YES** **Francis X. Golniewicz**
← **252 NO**

← **255 YES** **Moshe Jacobius**
← **256 NO**

← **259 YES** **Stuart F. Lubin**
← **260 NO**

← **263 YES** **Marvin P. Luckman**
← **264 NO**


If you spoil your ballot, ask the judge for a new one.
Si usted daa su balota, pdale una balota nueva al Juez.

Turn page to continue voting.
Voltee la página para continuar votando.

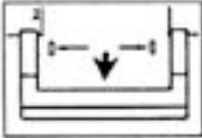
Voting instructions

Voting Instructions

STEP 1
Using both hands, insert the unfolded ballot card all the way into the votomatic. If ballot card is folded, you will not be able to vote.




STEP 2
Be sure the two holes in your ballot card fit down over the two red pins.



STEP 3
To vote, hold the voting instrument straight up. Punch straight down through the ballot card for the candidates of your choice.

Do not use pen or pencil



STEP 4
Vote all pages.

STEP 5
After voting, remove the ballot card from the Votomatic. Then fold the long stub down over the face of the voted ballot for privacy.

Note: If you make a mistake return your ballot card and obtain another.

AFTER VOTING, CHECK YOUR BALLOT CARD TO BE SURE YOUR VOTING SELECTIONS ARE CLEARLY AND CLEANLY PUNCHED AND THERE ARE NO CHIPS LEFT HANGING ON THE BACK OF THE CARD.

voting instructions
Instrucciones para votar

- 1**



Use both hands. Insert ballot card into votomatic making sure.

Con ambas manos introduce la tarjeta en la votación haciendo segura la tarjeta.

- 2**



Be sure the two holes in your ballot card fit down over the two red pins.

asegure que los dos agujeros de su tarjeta se ajusten sobre los dos alfileres rojos.

- 3**



Hold the votomatic straight up and down. Do not use pen or pencil.

Mantenga el votador en posición vertical, y no use lápiz o bolígrafo.

- 4**



After voting, always fold the stub of the ballot. Be sure all selections are clearly and cleanly punched and there are no chips left hanging from the back of the paper.

Después de votar, siempre pliegue la parte sobrante de la tarjeta. asegure que sus elecciones estén claramente y limpiamente marcadas y que no queden pedacitos de papel colgando de la parte posterior.

If you make a mistake, please call our election hotline for a new ballot.

Si comete algún error, por favor llame a nuestra línea de atención al elector para obtener una nueva tarjeta.

Minnesota absentee ballot instructions

Instructions for Absentee Voters

Step 1. You must have a witness to vote by absentee ballot. Your witness may be anyone who is registered to vote in Minnesota including your spouse or another relative, or they may be a notary public or person with the authority to administer oaths.

Step 2. Show your witness the unmarked ballot(s).

Step 3. Mark your votes according to the instructions on the ballot(s). Mark your ballot(s) in private. If you have a disability or are otherwise unable to mark the ballot(s), you may ask your witness to assist you. Make sure you do not vote for more candidates than allowed for any office, since this will prevent your votes for that office from being counted. If you make an error when marking your ballot, you may request a new ballot from the election official from whom you received your ballot. If you cannot request a new ballot, completely erase any errors and remark your ballot. Do not put any identifying marks on the ballot.

WHEN PARTISAN PRIMARY RACES ARE ON THE BALLOT:
If you are voting in a partisan primary, you may only vote for the candidates of one party on the partisan portion of the ballot. Voting for candidates not within the same party will prevent the entire partisan portion of your primary ballot from being counted.

Step 4. Fold and place all voted ballots in the ballot secrecy envelope and seal the envelope. Do not write on the ballot secrecy envelope.

Step 5. Place the ballot secrecy envelope into the ballot return envelope and seal the envelope.

Step 6. Print your name and address on the back of the ballot return envelope unless a label with your name and address has already been affixed. Sign your name. The name, address, and signature of your witness are required as well.

Step 7. Return your ballot by mail or an express service to the address on the ballot return envelope, allowing enough time to be delivered by election day. You may also deliver it in person by 5:00 p.m. on the day before election day or have another person return your ballot by 3:00 p.m. on election day (this person cannot return ballots for more than three voters).

Instructions

How to vote by absentee ballot for pre-registered voters

Get ready

You will need:

- Ballot
- Tan ballot envelope
- White signature envelope
- Pen with black ink
- Witness
Anyone registered to vote in Minnesota including your spouse or relative, or a notary public, or a person with the authority to administer oaths

- Vote!**
 - Show your witness your blank ballot, then mark your votes in private.
 - Follow the instructions on the ballot.
 - Do not write your name or ID number anywhere on the ballot.
 - Do not vote for more candidates than allowed. *If you do, your votes for that office will not count.*

See the other side if you make a mistake on your ballot.
- Seal your ballot in the tan ballot envelope**
 - Do not write on this envelope.
- Put the tan ballot envelope into the white signature envelope**
- Complete the white signature envelope**
 - If there is no label, print your name and Minnesota address.
 - Read and sign the oath and write the date.

This signature will be compared to the one on your absentee ballot application.

 - Ask your witness to print their name and Minnesota address and sign their name.
If your witness is an official, they must print their title instead of an address. Notaries must also affix their stamp.
 - Seal the envelope.
- Return your ballot by election day to the address on the signature envelope**
Ballots may not be delivered directly to your polling place.
You have three options:
 - Send it so it arrives by election day, using U.S. mail or a package delivery service,
 - Deliver it in person by 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election, or
 - Ask someone to deliver it by 3:00 p.m. on election day.
This person cannot deliver more than 3 ballots.

See other side for special instructions if you have a disability.

Redesign concept for New York ballots

THIS IS A TEST BALLOT: 2010-10-09 12:09:59

| OFFICE | 1 GOVERNOR AND LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR (Vote for any ONE) | 3 COMPTROLLER (Vote for any ONE) | 4 ATTORNEY GENERAL (Vote for any ONE) | 6 UNITED STATES SENATOR (8 Year Term) (Vote for any ONE) | 7 UNITED STATES SENATOR (2 Year - Unexpired Term) (Vote for any ONE) | 9 REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS (2nd District) (Vote for any ONE) | 10 STATE SENATOR (52nd District) (Vote for any ONE) | 11 MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY (52nd District) (Vote for any ONE) | 12 SURROGATE COURT JUDGE (Vote for any ONE) | 13 COUNTY JUDGE (Vote for any ONE) | 14 SHERIFF (Vote for any ONE) | 15 COUNTY LEGISLATOR (1st District) (Vote for any ONE) |
|------------|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|--|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| DEMOCRATIC | 1A Andrew M Cuomo Robert J Duffy | 3A Thomas P DiNapoli | 4A Eric T Schneiderman | 6A Charles E Schumer | 7A Kirsten E Gillibrand | 9A Maurice D Hinchey | 10A John P Orzel | 11A Donna Lupardo | | | 14A Gary F O'Neill | 15A Mark Whalen |
| REPUBLICAN | 1B Carl P Paladino Gregory J Edwards | 3B Harry Wilson | 4B Dan Donovan | 6B Jay Townsend | 7B Joseph J DiGuardi | 9B George K Phillips | 10B Thomas W Libous | 11B Arthur Garrison | 12B David H Guy | 13B Martin E Smith | 14B David E Harder | |

Instructions



Mark the oval to the left of the name of your choice.

To vote for a candidate whose name is not printed on the ballot, print the name clearly under the words 'Write-in', staying within the box.

The number of choices is listed for each contest. Do not mark the ballot for more choices than allowed. You do not have to vote in every contest.

If you make a mistake, or want to change your vote, ask a poll worker for a new ballot.



Official Ballot for the General Election 12th Assembly District, County of Broome City of Binghamton, Election District 26

November 2nd, 2011 State of New York Ballot ID: 1026

| | Governor and Lieutenant Governor Vote once | Comptroller Vote for 1 | Attorney General Vote for 1 | U.S. Senator (8-year term) Vote for 1 | U.S. Senator (2-year unexpired term) Vote for 1 | Representative in Congress 22nd District Vote for 1 | State Senator 52nd District Vote for 1 | Member of Assembly Vote for 1 | Surrogate Court Judge Vote for 1 | County Judge Vote for 1 | Sheriff Vote for 1 | County Legislator 1st District Vote for 1 |
|---------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|---|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| Democratic | <input type="radio"/> Andrew M Cuomo and Robert J Duffy Democratic | <input type="radio"/> Thomas P DiNapoli Democratic | <input type="radio"/> Eric T Schneiderman Democratic | <input type="radio"/> Charles E Schumer Democratic | <input type="radio"/> Kirsten E Gillibrand Democratic | <input type="radio"/> Maurice D Hinchey Democratic | <input type="radio"/> John P Orzel Democratic | <input type="radio"/> Donna A Lupardo Democratic | | | <input type="radio"/> Gary F O'Neill Democratic | <input type="radio"/> Mark Whalen Democratic |
| Republican | <input type="radio"/> Carl P Paladino and Gregory J Edwards Republican | <input type="radio"/> Harry Wilson Republican | <input type="radio"/> Dan Donovan Republican | <input type="radio"/> Jay Townsend Republican | <input type="radio"/> Joseph J DiGuardi Republican | <input type="radio"/> George K Phillips Republican | <input type="radio"/> Thomas W Libous Republican | <input type="radio"/> Arthur Garrison Republican | <input type="radio"/> David H Guy Republican | <input type="radio"/> Martin E Smith Republican | <input type="radio"/> David E Harder Republican | |
| Independence | <input type="radio"/> Andrew M Cuomo and Robert J Duffy Independence | <input type="radio"/> Harry Wilson Independence | <input type="radio"/> Eric T Schneiderman Independence | <input type="radio"/> Charles E Schumer Independence | <input type="radio"/> Kirsten E Gillibrand Independence | <input type="radio"/> Maurice D Hinchey Independence | <input type="radio"/> Thomas W Libous Independence | <input type="radio"/> Arthur Garrison Independence | | | <input type="radio"/> David E Harder Independence | |
| Conservative | <input type="radio"/> Carl P Paladino and Gregory J Edwards Conservative | <input type="radio"/> Harry Wilson Conservative | <input type="radio"/> Dan Donovan Conservative | <input type="radio"/> Jay Townsend Conservative | <input type="radio"/> Joseph J DiGuardi Conservative | <input type="radio"/> George K Phillips Conservative | <input type="radio"/> Thomas W Libous Conservative | <input type="radio"/> Arthur Garrison Conservative | | | <input type="radio"/> David E Harder Conservative | |
| Working Families | <input type="radio"/> Andrew M Cuomo and Robert J Duffy Working Families | <input type="radio"/> Thomas P DiNapoli Working Families | <input type="radio"/> Eric T Schneiderman Working Families | <input type="radio"/> Charles E Schumer Working Families | <input type="radio"/> Kirsten E Gillibrand Working Families | <input type="radio"/> Maurice D Hinchey Working Families | | <input type="radio"/> Donna A Lupardo Working Families | | <input type="radio"/> Martin E Smith Working Families | <input type="radio"/> TR Roberts Working Families | |
| Green | <input type="radio"/> Howie Hawkins and Gloria Mattera Green | <input type="radio"/> Julia A Willebrand Green | | <input type="radio"/> Colia Clark Green | <input type="radio"/> Cecile A Lawrence Green | | | <input type="radio"/> Jason T Stokes Our Founding Fathers | | | | |
| Rent Is 2 Damn High | <input type="radio"/> Jimmy McMillan Rent Is 2 Damn High | | | | <input type="radio"/> Joseph Huff Rent Is 2 Damn High | | | | | | | |
| Libertarian Freedom | <input type="radio"/> Warren Redlich and Aiden Link Libertarian Freedom | <input type="radio"/> Charles Barron and Eva M Doyle Freedom | <input type="radio"/> John Gaetani Libertarian | <input type="radio"/> Carl E Person Libertarian | <input type="radio"/> Randy A Credico Libertarian Antiprohibition | <input type="radio"/> John Clifton Libertarian | | | | | | |
| Taxpayers Antiprohibition | <input type="radio"/> Carl P Paladino and Gregory J Edwards Taxpayers | <input type="radio"/> Kristin M Davis and Tanya Gendelman Antiprohibition | | <input type="radio"/> Ramon J Jimenez Freedom | | <input type="radio"/> Vivian Morgan Antiprohibition | <input type="radio"/> Bruce Blakeman Tax Revolt | | | | | |
| Write-in | Write-in: | | Write-in: | Write-in: | Write-in: | Write-in: | Write-in: | Write-in: | Write-in: | Write-in: | Write-in: | Write-in: |

Turn ballot over →



**Best Practices:
Design ballots to
be easy to read**

OFFICIAL BALLOT
FOR THE
GENERAL ELECTION
NOVEMBER 2, 2010
CITY OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF NEW YORK

SUNNY SIDE
64th ST. PROJECT
E.D.S. 17

Affidavit Stamp Here

PROPOSALS PROPUESTAS

GENERAL ELECTION INSTRUCTIONS
(1) Mark only with a writing instrument provided by the Board of Elections.
(2) To vote for a candidate whose name is printed on this ballot fill in the oval above or next to the name of the candidate.
(3) To vote for a person whose name is not printed on this ballot write or stamp his or her name in the space labeled "Write-in" that appears at the end of the row for such office and fill in the oval corresponding with the write-in space in which you have written in a name.
(4) To vote yes or no on a proposal, if any, that appears on the back of the ballot fill in the oval that corresponds to your vote.
(5) Any other mark or writing, or any erasure made on this ballot outside the voting areas or blank spaces provided for voting will void this entire ballot.
(6) Do not overvote. If you select a greater number of candidates than there are vacancies to be filled, your ballot will be void for that public office, party position or proposal.
(7) If you tear, or deface, or wrongly mark this ballot, return it and obtain another. Do not attempt to correct mistakes on the ballot by making erasures or cross outs. Erasures or cross outs may invalidate all or part of your ballot. Prior to submitting your ballot, if you make a mistake in completing the ballot or wish to change your ballot choices, you may obtain and complete a new ballot. You have a right to a replacement ballot upon return of the original ballot.
(8) After completing your ballot, insert it into the ballot scanner and wait for the receipt. If your ballot has been successfully scanned. If no such notice appears, seek the assistance of an election inspector.

INSTRUCCIONES PARA LA ELECCIÓN GENERAL
(1) Marque sistemáticamente con un instrumento de escritura proporcionado por la Junta de Elecciones.
(2) Para votar por un candidato(a) cuyo nombre aparece en esta papeleta, llene el óvalo encima o al lado del nombre del candidato(a).
(3) Para votar por una persona cuyo nombre no aparece en esta papeleta, escriba o estampe el nombre en el espacio designado "Candidato por Escribir", que aparece al final de la fila para tal cargo público, y llene el óvalo correspondiente con el espacio en cual ha escrito un nombre.
(4) Para votar si o no por un propuesta, que aparece en la parte posterior de la papeleta, llene el óvalo que corresponde a su voto.
(5) Cualquier otra marca, escritura, o borradura hecha en esta papeleta fuera de las casillas de votación o espacios en blanco proporcionados para votar anulará esta papeleta por completo.
(6) No vote de más. Si selecciona un mayor número de candidatos del número de posiciones por cubrir, su papeleta será anulada para ese cargo público, posición de partido, o propuesta.
(7) Si usted rompe, desfigura, o marca incorrectamente esta papeleta, devuélvala y obtenga otra. No intente corregir errores en la papeleta haciendo borraduras o rayados. Borraduras o rayados pueden invalidar toda o parte de su papeleta. Antes de entregar su papeleta, si usted hace un error completando la papeleta o si desea cambiar sus selecciones, usted puede obtener y completar una papeleta nueva. Tiene el derecho a una papeleta de reemplazo si devolviera la papeleta original.
(8) Después de haber completado su papeleta, insértela en la máquina de escaneo y espere por el aviso que su papeleta ha sido escaneada con éxito. Si no aparece tal aviso, solicite la asistencia de un inspector electoral.

1 YES NO
SI No

Proposal Number One, Question - Term Limits
The proposal would amend the City Charter to:
• Reduce from five to two the maximum number of consecutive full terms that can be served by elected city officials; and
• Make this change in term limits applicable only to those city officials who are first elected at or after the 2010 general election and;
• Prohibit the City Council from altering the term limits of elected city officials then serving office.
Should this proposal be adopted?

Propuesta Número Uno, Pregunta - Límites del Periodo
La propuesta modificará los Estatutos de la Ciudad para:
• Reducir el número máximo de períodos consecutivos que funcionarios electos de la ciudad puedan desempeñar, de tres a dos; y
• Hacer este cambio de límites del periodo aplicable solo a esos funcionarios electos de la ciudad que son elegidos por primera vez en o después de la elección general del 2010; y
• Prohibir al Consejo de la Ciudad de alterar los límites del periodo de los funcionarios electos desempeñando en el cargo.
¿Debe aprobarse la modificación propuesta?

1 YES NO
SI No

Proposal Number Two, Question - Elections and Government Administration
The proposal would amend the City Charter to:
• Disclosure of Independent Campaign Spending: Require public disclosure of expenditures made by entities and individuals independent from candidates to influence the outcome of a city election or referendum.
• Ballot Access: Generally reduce the number of petition signatures needed by candidates for city elective office to appear on a ballot.
• Voter Assistance and Campaign Finance Board: Merge voter assistance functions, including a reconstituted Voter Assistance Advisory Committee, into the Campaign Finance Board, and change when Campaign Finance Board member terms begin.
• Conflicts of Interest Law: Require all public servants to receive conflicts of interest training, raise the maximum fine for a public servant who violates the City's conflicts of interest law, and allow the city to recover any benefits obtained from such violations.
• City Administrative Tribunals: Authorize the Mayor to direct the merger of administrative tribunals and adjudications into the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings and permit the Department of Consumer Affairs to adjudicate all violations issued by that department.
• City Reporting Requirements and Advisory Bodies: Create a commission to review requirements for reports and advisory bodies and waive the requirements, subject to City Council review, where the commission finds they are not of continuing value; and
• Map of Facility Siting: Include in the City's facilities siting map those transportation and waste management facilities operated by or for governmental entities, or by private entities that provide comparable services.
Should this proposal be adopted?

Propuesta Número Dos, Pregunta - Administración de Elecciones y del Gobierno
La propuesta modificará los estatutos de la ciudad para:
• Divulgación de los Gastos de Campaña Independiente: Exigir divulgación pública de los gastos realizados por entidades e individuos, independiente de los candidatos, para influir en los resultados de una elección o referéndum de la ciudad.
• Acceso a la Papeleta: Generalmente reducir el número de firmas en las peticiones necesarias por los candidatos, para cargos de elección democrática de la ciudad, para aparecer en la papeleta.
• Asistencia a los Votantes y la Junta de Financiamiento de Campañas: Combinar las funciones de asistencia a los votantes, incluyendo un Comité Consultivo de Asistencia a los Votantes reconstituido, con la Junta de Financiamiento de Campañas y cambiar cuándo comienzan los periodos de los miembros de la Junta de Financiamiento de Campañas.
• Ley de Conflicto de Intereses: Exigir a todos los funcionarios públicos recibir entrenamiento en conflictos de intereses, aumentar la multa máxima para un funcionario público que infringe la ley de conflicto de intereses de la Ciudad, y permitir a la Ciudad a recuperar cualquier beneficio obtenido de tal infracción.
• Tribunales Administrativos de la Ciudad: Autorizar al Alcalde a dirigir la combinación de tribunales administrativos y adjudicaciones con la Oficina de Juicios y Audiencias Administrativas y permitir el Departamento de Asuntos del Consumidor a adjudicar todas las infracciones cronológicas por el departamento.
• Requisitos de Presentación de Informes de la Ciudad y Grupos Consultivos: Crear una comisión para revisar los requisitos para los informes y las juntas consultivas y renunciar los requisitos, sujeto a revisión por el Consejo de la Ciudad, que la comisión comprueba que no son de valor constante; y
• Mapa de Ubicación de Facilidades: Incluir en el mapa de ubicación de facilidades de la ciudad esas facilidades de transporte y manejo de residuos operadas por o para entidades gubernamentales, o por entidades privadas que proporcionan servicios comparables.
¿Debe aprobarse la modificación propuesta?

2 YES NO
SI No

Sample Ballot

Julie Dell
President

Nancy Notable-Schachter
Michael J. Ryan

Juan Carlos Polanco
Secretary

J. P. Rigo
Gregory C. Scamias

Jose Miguel Araya
Nelson Barera

Justin D. Suop
President M. Ursano

Commissioners of Elections

OFFICIAL BALLOT FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION - City of New York - County of New York - November 2, 2010

Make the text large enough

One of the most frequent complaints from voters in usability tests is the size of the text on paper ballots

KATHY M. FLANAGAN



Kathy M. Flanagan



Use lowercase letters, not ALL CAPITAL LETTERS

- The shapes of the letters are not as distinct.
- Lines of text look more crowded
- In social media, capital letters are like shouting

| Representative in Congress 22nd District Vote for 1 | State Senator 52nd District Vote for 1 | Member of Assembly Vote for 1 |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Maurice D Hinchey Democratic | <input type="radio"/> John P Orzel Democratic | <input type="radio"/> Donna A Lupardo Democratic |
| <input type="radio"/> George K Phillips Republican | <input type="radio"/> Thomas W Libous Republican | <input type="radio"/> Arthur Garrison Republican |
| <input type="radio"/> Maurice D Hinchey Independence | <input type="radio"/> Thomas W Libous Independence | <input type="radio"/> Arthur Garrison Independence |


Align text on the left,
instead of centering it

Strong alignment makes the ballot
easier to scan

- Ballot identification header
- Contests and candidates
- Ballot questions
- Instructions

Yamhill County, Oregon
Official General Election Ballot
November 5, 2002

Ballot Style 3

| President and Vice-President of the United States | | City Co |
|---|---|---|
| Vote for 1 pair | |  Vot |
| <input type="radio"/> | John F. Kerry and John Edwards Democrat | <input type="radio"/> Br De |
| <input type="radio"/> | George W. Bush and Dick Cheney Republican | <input type="radio"/> Br Re |
| <input type="radio"/> | Michael Badnarik and Richard Campagna | <input type="radio"/> Br Lib |
| | | <input type="radio"/> or |
| | | <input type="radio"/> or |

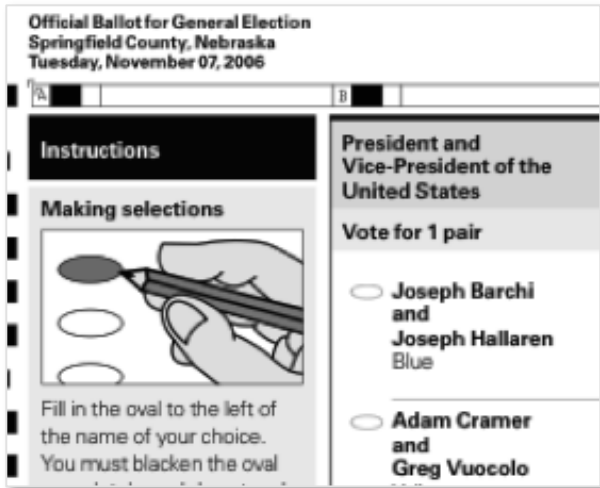
Pick one font

The best practices suggest

- Use a single font family
- Pick a sans-serif font
- Use size and weight (bold or light fonts) for emphasis



**Best Practices:
Use design for
organization and
meaning**



Use color and contrast in meaningful ways

Shading and color create hierarchy of importance

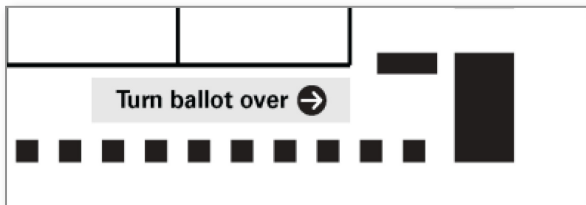
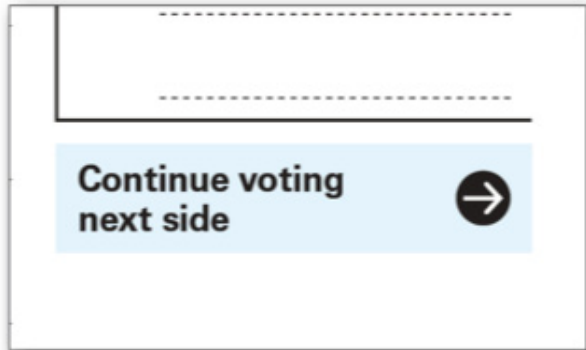
- Separate instructions and contests
- Highlight selections
- Emphasize important information



Place instructions to guide voters through the ballot

Put instructions where they are needed

- In the upper-left or first column
- Before the first contest.
- When instructions change
- At the end of a form



authorized to give oaths.

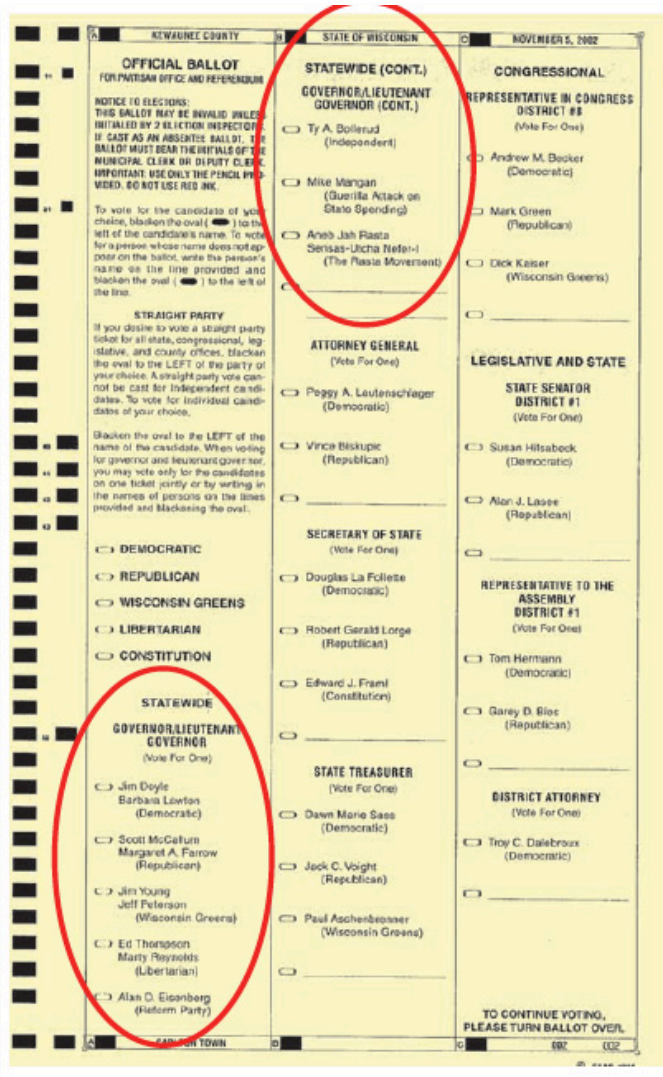
| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Witness Signature | X |
|----------------------|---|

If notary, must affix stamp

Have you...

- Sealed your ballot in the tan ballot envelope?
- Put the ballot envelope in this envelope?
- Signed this envelope?
- Asked your witness to complete their section and sign their name?

Then, return your ballot so it is received by election day.


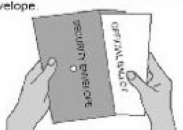





Use layout to reinforce organization and meaning

Don't split contests

- Sample ballots in Ohio in 2008 also split the first contest across two columns

Kewaunee County, Wisconsin, 2002

| King County, Washington Official General Election Ballot November 3, 2009 | |
|---|---|
| Instructions | State of Washington |
| <p>Making selections</p> <p>Use a dark pen to completely fill in the oval next to your choice.</p>  <p>1 Do not cut, tear or damage ballot.</p> <p>Returning the ballot</p> <p>Insert completed ballot into security envelope.</p>  <p>Insert security envelope containing completed ballot into return envelope. Sign the oath on the return envelope.</p>  <p>Optional</p> <p>Write-in</p> <p>To vote for a write-in candidate, write the name and darken the oval.</p>  <p>Making corrections</p> <p>To make a correction, draw a line through the candidate's name. You then have the option of making another choice.</p>  | <p>State of Washington</p> <p>Proposed by Initiative Petition</p> <p>Initiative Measure No. 1033</p> <p>Initiative Measure No. 1033 concerns state, county and city revenue. This measure would limit growth of certain state, county and city revenue to annual inflation and population growth, not including voter-approved revenue increases. Revenue collected above the limit would reduce property tax levies. Should this measure be enacted into law?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> YES</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NO</p> |
| | <p>King County</p> <p>Passed by the Legislature and Ordered Referred by Petition</p> <p>Referendum Measure No. 71</p> <p>The legislature passed Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5688 concerning rights and responsibilities of state-registered domestic partners and voters have filed a sufficient referendum petition on this bill. This bill would expand the rights, responsibilities, and obligations accorded state-registered same-sex and senior domestic partners to be equivalent to those of married spouses, except that a domestic partnership is not a marriage. Should this bill be:</p> <p><input type="radio"/> APPROVED</p> <p><input type="radio"/> REJECTED</p> <p>King County</p> <p>Charter Amendment No. 1 Repeal of Section 350.20.30 and Portions of Article 9 - Transitory Provisions</p> <p>Shall those no longer relevant portions of King County Charter Article 9 relating to the county's prior transition to a home rule charter and King County Charter Section 350.20.30, relating to the county's transition to a metropolitan form of government, be repealed, as provided in Ordinance No. 16484?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> YES</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NO</p> <p>Charter Amendment No. 2 Repeal of Charter Section 475 - Work Programs and Allotments</p> <p>Shall King County Charter Section 475, relating to preparation of work programs and requested allotments and to appropriation transfers, be repealed, as provided in Ordinance No. 16546?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> YES</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NO</p> <p>Charter Amendment No. 3 Amendment of Section 800 - Charter Review</p> <p>Shall King County Charter Section 800 be amended to clarify that charter commission appointees are to be confirmed by the council and to provide that the council is required to consider proposed charter amendments and act on them at an open public meeting, as provided in Ordinance Nos. 16547 and 16599?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> YES</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NO</p> |
| | <p>King County</p> <p>Charter Amendment No. 4 Adding New Section 897 - High Conservation Value Properties</p> <p>Shall the King County Charter be amended to add a new Section 897 that would provide enhanced protection for certain county properties designated as high conservation value properties by prohibiting the county from conveying or relinquishing its interest in those properties or authorizing their expanded use, except in specified circumstances, as provided in Ordinance No. 16600?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> YES</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NO</p> <p>County Executive short and full term nonpartisan office vote for one</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Susan Hutchison</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Dow Constantine</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p> <p>Sheriff nonpartisan office vote for one</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Sue Rahr</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p> <p>Assessor unexpired 2-year term nonpartisan office vote for one</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Graham Albertini</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Gene Lux</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Lloyd Hara</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Rosenberger</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bob Blanchard</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p> <p>Judicial</p> <p>Court of Appeals, Division No. 1, District No. 1 Judge Position No. 3 nonpartisan office vote for one</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Anne L. Ellington</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p> <p>Port</p> <p>Port of Seattle Commissioner Position No. 1 nonpartisan office vote for one</p> <p><input type="radio"/> John Creighton</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p> |

Continued on other side

Use layout to reinforce organization and meaning

Don't hide contests below instructions



Photo from the Trace Center

**What holds us
back?**

8210.0500 INSTRUCTIONS TO ABSENT VOTER.

Subpart 1. Required instructions.

Instructions to the absent voter shall be ~~enclosed~~ transmitted with the absentee ballot materials ~~mailed sent~~ or delivered to the absent voter. The instructions shall be in the form in subpart 2, 3, ~~or 4, or 5 and 6~~. The instructions may include a telephone number or electronic mail address which voters can call or contact for help in absentee voting. ~~In election jurisdictions using electronic voting systems,~~ The instructions must explain how to correctly mark ~~and fold the electronic voting system ballots~~ ballot. The instructions must inform the voter of the effect of casting multiple votes for an office and, in the case of a partisan primary, the effect of voting for candidates of more than one party. The instructions must include information on how to correct a ballot before it is cast and counted, including instructions on how to request a replacement ballot if the voter is unable to change the ballot or correct an error. The instructions must include a graphic depiction of the absentee ballot materials and how they are to be assembled by the voter. The secretary of state must provide each county auditor with a sample graphic depiction.

Subp. 2. Instructions for registered voters.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ABSENTEE VOTERS

Step 1. You must have a witness to vote by absentee ballot. Your witness may be anyone who is registered to vote in Minnesota including your spouse or another relative, ~~or they may be a notary public or a person with the authority to administer oaths.~~

Step 2. Show your witness the unmarked ballot(s).

Step 3. Mark your votes in private according to the instructions on the ballot(s). ~~Mark your ballot(s) in private. If you have a disability or are otherwise unable to mark the ballot(s), you may ask your witness to assist you.~~ Make sure you do not vote for more candidates than allowed for any office, since this will prevent your votes for that office from being counted. If you make an error ~~when marking your ballot, you may~~ request a new ballot ~~from the election official from whom you received your ballot.~~ If you cannot request a new ballot, either completely erase any errors or draw a line through the name of the candidate(s) for whom you mistakenly voted and remark your ballot for your preferred candidate(s). Do not ~~put any identifying marks~~ write your name or an identification number anywhere on the ballot.

WHEN PARTISAN PRIMARY RACES ARE ON THE BALLOT: If you are voting in a partisan primary, you may only vote for the candidates of one party ~~on the partisan portion of the ballot.~~ Voting for candidates ~~not within the same~~ of more than one party will prevent the entire partisan portion of your primary ballot from being counted.

We negotiate design in legal markup, not as it will be seen by voters

- How can anyone understand what this will look like?
- How can we know whether it will be usable?



Election departments don't have (enough) design resources

- We need more programs like the AIGA Election Design Fellowships in Oregon and Washington







study = cookies!

we need you!
help out Washington State Elections

it's a usability study
like a survey, but more fun!

free cookies
for less than 10 minutes of your time



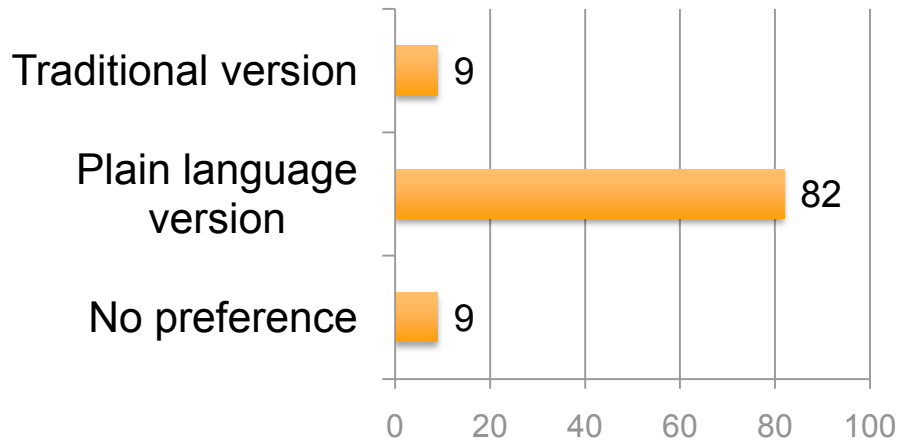
Randy and I spent the morning at the Olympia Farmers Market, where we found 13 volunteers to fill out variations on our redesigned Voter Registration Form. We fully believe in bribery with baked goods, and volunteers walked away with chocolate chip cookies, snickerdoodles, voting buttons and free umbrellas! It was a great day.

Poster from Washington State, Jenny Greeve

We don't spend (enough) time learning from voters

- Usability testing does not have to be formal or expensive.
- Observing usability tests is not the same as demos, meetings, hearings or consultations.

Preference for style of instructions (% of participants)



Voters can tell the difference

Participants in a study of instruction styles overwhelmingly preferred the plain language version

Report of Findings: Use of Language in Ballot Instructions, NIST IR 7556

Everything gets usability tested...
will it be before or during the election?





The Usability in Civic Life project promotes usability in elections, plain language and accessibility.

We....

- mobilize usability professionals to participate in projects supporting better election design.

- teach workshops and give presentations for election officials on usability testing, design and plain language

- created the LEO usability testing kit for election officials

Find us online at www.usabilityprofessionals.org/civiclif or our blog <http://ballotusability.blogspot.com/>