

Project: Redesign of Permanent Vote By Mail Postcard Application

Goal of project: In 2020, when the state required we mail every voter a vote by mail application, some voters were unhappy to receive the application and thought it meant that they were forced to vote by mail, even though it mentioned election day voting and early voting. When the state required a permanent vote by mail application be mailed to every voter for the 2022 General Election, we did a slight redesign to specify that voter's polling place in particular. We still had voter requests that the postcard do more to show other voting options besides vote by mail. When we pointed out the information was inside, they were unaware of that. We also noticed that those who completed the vote by mail application were checking more options than they needed to, meaning the card was obviously confusing,

Project Summary: The Center for Civic Design came in early December for 2 days. During those two days, they provided training on usability testing. Through this training, we learned how to test something to see how a voter would use it and if it was providing the information we wanted to convey. In the postcard redesign we did, we brought in 3 voters as well as conducted 'off the street' voters at the Carlinville library and gave them different versions of the postcard to gauge what was working best. Voters were asked to fill out the application, get their thoughts, see if anything is confusing, find out if they were able to see the different voting options there are, and a few other design tweaks. The training we received on this type of testing is a skill we as an office could utilize in the future on our own when it comes to forms, applications, training materials, etc.

The redesign of the card moved it more towards a 'Voting Plan' postcard and away from a vote by mail application postcard. We had tried that for the 2022 General Election, but still found voters weren't seeing the different options. The front of the card now encourages voters to make a voting plan and tells them that the inside shows them their polling place, early vote opportunities, and vote by mail information. The inside also is much more visually appealing and shows the relevant information in a much easier to see way. The design also allows for removing the application half of the card completely and mail out just the voting plan reminder portion in the future if the office chose to do so.

Final Result: See next page