# Improving Your Election Website

Communicating Trusted Election Information
May 7, 2020
#TrustedInfo2020

CENTER FOR TECH AND CIVIC LIFE

# Housekeeping

- Take notes using the **Participant Guide**
- **Captioned recordings** will be available
- Use the **chat panel** to say hello, chat with other attendees, participate in breakouts, and ask questions

# Today’s objectives

- Identify the top civic information people are looking for online
- Apply principles of plain language and design to your website
- Prioritize methods for building trust with your voters online

# Today’s agenda

- Introduction (5 minutes)
- Prioritizing key election information (15 minutes)
- Making election information usable (45 minutes)
- Building trust online (10 minutes)
- Q&A (10 minutes)
- Course survey (3 minutes)

How to address your community's needs

# PRIORITIZING KEY ELECTION INFORMATION

# What are voters' top 5 questions in a typical election?

Take 1 minute to write down your ideas, then we'll share what the research shows.

# Top questions from voters

1. What is on the ballot?
2. How do I get an absentee ballot, and when is it due?
3. Where do I vote?
4. Who is in office now?
5. How do I register to vote?

# Top question from non-voters

1. How do I participate in an election?

# Let’s experiment

What’s it like to search for information on a county election website?

# #1 What is on the ballot?

# Volusia County Department of Elections

## Lisa Lewis, Supervisor of Elections

| Registered Voters as of 08/20/2018 (Includes Active and Inactive Voters) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Democrats | Republicans | NPA | Other | Total |
| 135,535 | 137,696 | 117,812 | 2,956 | 393,999 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Register to Vote | Vote by Mail Request | Precinct Locator | Contact Us |
| Voter Status | Vote by Mail Status | Provisional Status | Translate |

**Avoid the Rush...**

**Order a Vote-by-Mail Ballot Today!**

**What is a Closed Primary Election?**

**Be Election Ready!**

RegistertoVoteFlorida.gov

**Sample Ballot**

Primary Election
August 28, 2018 - Sample Ballot
Elección Primaria
28 de agosto 2018 - Papeleta de Muestra

## 2018 Proposed Constitutional Amendments & Information

## News & Updates

**2018 Canvassing Board Information**

# Volusia County Department of Elections

## Lisa Lewis, Supervisor of Elections

| Registered Voters as of 3/20/2018 (Includes Active and Inactive Voters) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Democrats | Republicans | NPA | Other | Total |
| 135,535 | 137,696 | 117,812 | 2,956 | 393,999 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
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## 2018 Proposed Constitutional Amendments & Information

## News & Updates

2018 Canvassing Board Information

# #2 How do I get an absentee ballot, and when is it due?

# Election Information

VIEW ELECTION RESULTS

FIND OUT THE

ELECTION DAY RESULTS

AVAILABLE AFTER POLLS CLOSE ON ELECTION DAY

FIND MY POLLING PLACE

ELECTION DAY REQUIREMENTS

VOTER REGISTRATION

EARLY VOTING INFORMATION

Connect With Us (435) 477-8300

IRON COUNTY

Departments Jobs Commission News Contact Us

# Election Information

VIEW ELECTION RESULTS

FIND OUT THE

ELECTION DAY RESULTS

AVAILABLE AFTER POLLS CLOSE ON ELECTION DAY

FIND MY POLLING PLACE

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IRON COUNTY

Departments Jobs Commission News Contact Us

# Early Voting

**Click the Locations Below to see the Dates and Times of Operation**

| Locations | Dates |
|---|---|
| Iron County Courthouse<br>68 S 100 E, Parowan Utah | view |
| Cedar City Council Chambers<br>10 N Main St, Cedar City Utah | view |
| Enoch City Offices<br>900 E Midvalley Rd, Enoch Utah | view |

# #3 How do I register to vote?

Brown County Kansas

DMS OnLine  Parcel Search

Home  Elected Officials  County Departments  Employees  General Information

Elected Officials > County Clerk

# CLERK'S OFFICE

Phone: 785-742-2581  Fax: 785-742-7705

***Melissa Gormley***
*County Clerk*

**Deputy: Dawn Boyles**
**Clerk: Barb Grabhorn**

Minutes
- 2003 Minutes
- 2004 Minutes
- 2005 Minutes
- 2006 Minutes
- 2007 Minutes
- 2008 Minutes
- 2009 Minutes
- 2010 Minutes
- 2011 Minutes
- 2012 Minutes
- 2013 Minutes
- 2014 Minutes
- 2015 Minutes
- 2016 Minutes
- 2017 Minutes
- 2018 Minutes

Election Info
- Voting Locations
- Early Voting
- Sample Ballots
- Forms
  - Advance Ballot Application
  - Federal Post Card Application
  - Voter Registration
- Provisional Ballot Counting
- Notices

Election Results

**Duties of the Office:**

- Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners

Brown County Kansas
DMS Online
Parcel Search
Elected Officials > County Clerk
CLERK'S OFFICE
Phone: 785-742-2581
Fax: 785-742-7705
Melissa Gormley
County Clerk
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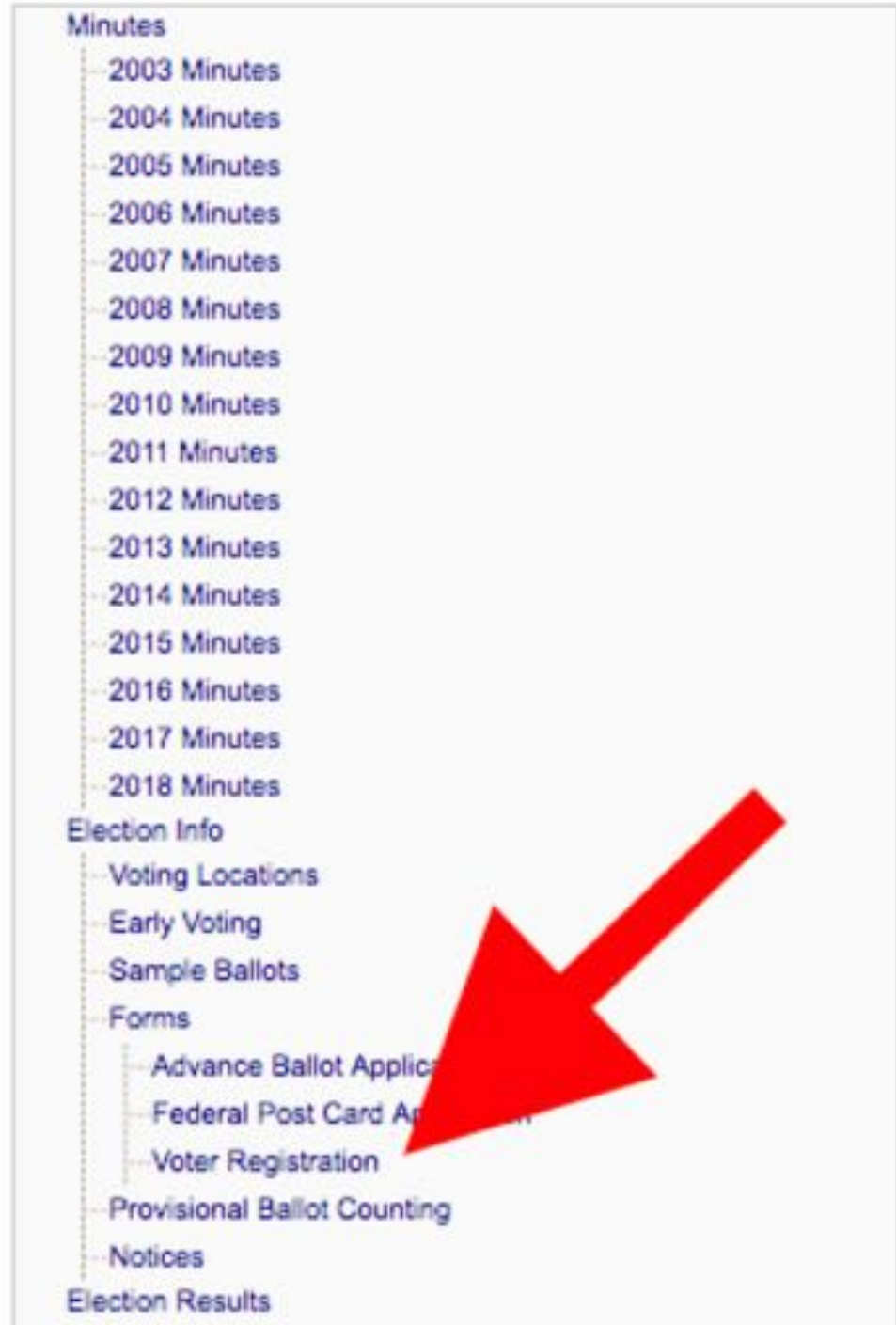
Duties of the Office:
. Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners


Minutes
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Election Info
Voting Locations
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Sample Ballots
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Election Results

# Recap

- Was it easy to find what you needed?
- Did the sites remind you of your own website?
- What suggestions do you have to improve the sites?

Putting plain language and plain design to work

# MAKING ELECTION INFORMATION USABLE

# Design → usability

## Site Navigation


- Home
- Leisure and Entertainment
- City Calendars
- Emergency Center
- e-Services
- Mayor and Aldermen
- Transportation
- Departmental Expenditures
- Departments
  - Airport
  - Assessors
  - Cemeteries
  - Central Fleet Management
  - City Clerk
    - Departmental Expenditures
    - City Clerk Announcements
    - City Clerk Calendar
    - City Clerk FAQ
    - Contact City Clerk
    - About Our Government
    - Access to Governmental Records
    - Street Discontinuances
    - Meeting Minutes and Agendas
    - Boards and Commissions
  - City Charter
  - Code of Ordinances


City Clerk Home | Marriage Licenses | Access to Governmental Records | Voter Registration & Elections | Vital Records & Genealogy | Licenses & Permits | Dog Licensing | Municipal Archives & Records | Contact City Clerk

## Voter Registration and Elections

The Office of the City Clerk conducts and preserves the integrity of all local, state and national elections held in Manchester, New Hampshire. The next scheduled local elections will feature the **State Primary Election** on **September 11, 2018** followed by the **State General Election** on **November 6, 2018**. The elections will be held between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. across all twelve city wards.

To view all upcoming ballots view our Sample Ballot page to see your choices as the ballots become available.

If you are unsure of the correct location for you to vote on Election Day, select the "Where do I vote?" option below.

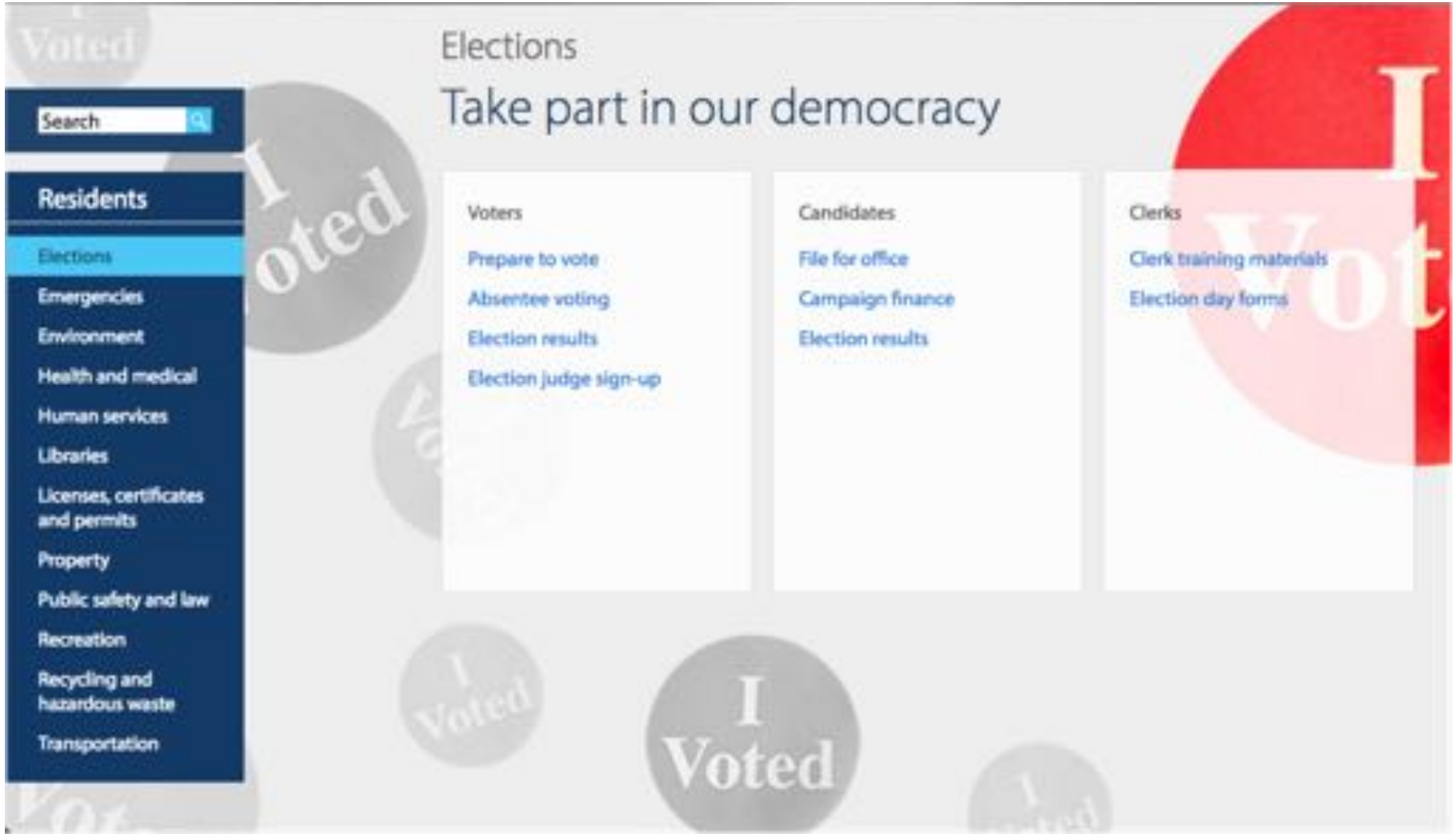
**Absentee Ballot applications** for the upcoming elections can be printed using the link below and completed in the convenience of your home. As a registered Manchester voter, you may mail, e-mail (cityclerk@manchesternh.gov), fax, or hand deliver your completed application to the Office of the City Clerk, One City Hall Plaza, Manchester, NH 03101

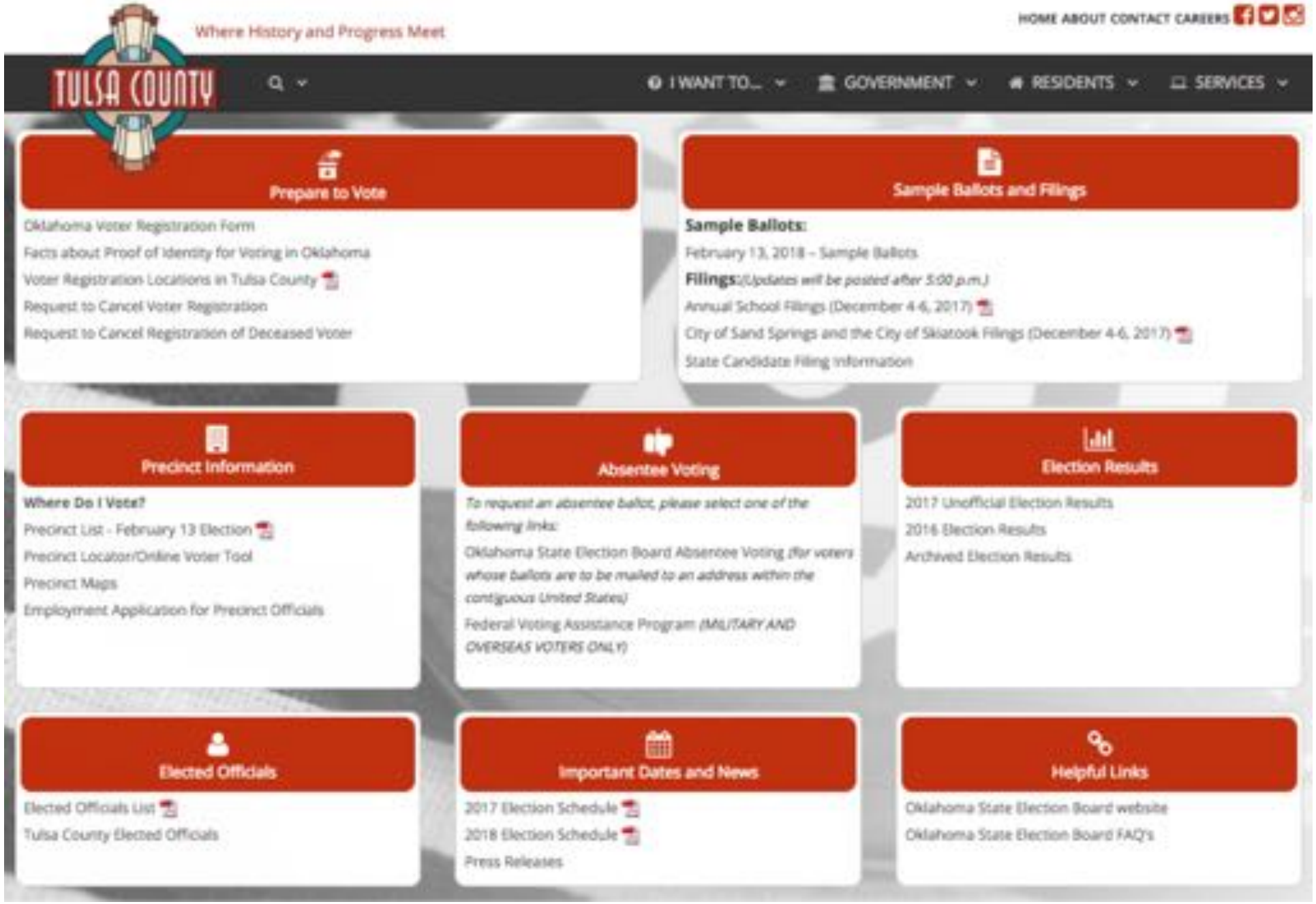
- Absentee Ballot Application - State Primary and/or General Elections (9/11/18 & 11/6/18)

## Related Links


- Election Schedules
- How to Register
- How to File for Office
- Political Campaign Reporting
- Political Committees
- Other Election Sites
- Ward Lines
- Political Calendar
- Sample Ballots
- Election Results
- Polling Locations
- Where do I Vote?


Get ADOBE READER


Search
Residents
Elections
Emergencies
Environment
Health and medical
Human services
Libraries
Licenses, certificates and permits
Property
Public safety and law
Recreation
Recycling and hazardous waste
Transportation
Elections
Take part in our democracy
Voters
Prepare to vote
Absentee voting
Election results
Election judge sign-up
Candidates
File for office
Campaign finance
Election results
Clerks
Clerk training materials
Election day forms
I Voted


TULSA COUNTY
Where History and Progress Meet
HOME ABOUT CONTACT CAREERS
I WANT TO...
GOVERNMENT
RESIDENTS
SERVICES
Prepare to Vote
Oklahoma Voter Registration Form
Facts about Proof of Identity for Voting in Oklahoma
Voter Registration Locations in Tulsa County
Request to Cancel Voter Registration
Request to Cancel Registration of Deceased Voter
Sample Ballots and Filings
Sample Ballots:
February 13, 2018 – Sample Ballots
Filings: (Updates will be posted after 5:00 p.m.)
Annual School Filings (December 4-6, 2017)
City of Sand Springs and the City of Skiatook Filings (December 4-6, 2017)
State Candidate Filing Information
Precinct Information
Where Do I Vote?
Precinct List - February 13 Election
Precinct Locator/Online Voter Tool
Precinct Maps
Employment Application for Precinct Officials
Absentee Voting
To request an absentee ballot, please select one of the following links:
Oklahoma State Election Board Absentee Voting (for voters whose ballots are to be mailed to an address within the contiguous United States)
Federal Voting Assistance Program (MILITARY AND OVERSEAS VOTERS ONLY)
Election Results
2017 Unofficial Election Results
2016 Election Results
Archived Election Results
Elected Officials
Elected Officials List
Tulsa County Elected Officials
Important Dates and News
2017 Election Schedule
2018 Election Schedule
Press Releases
Helpful Links
Oklahoma State Election Board website
Oklahoma State Election Board FAQ's

# Inyo County Elections

Kammi Foote, Registrar of Voters

Your Representatives | Clerk-Recorder | Voter registration | Candidates/Voter File | Military/Overseas voting | What's new

- Election results
- Next election: March 3, 2020
- What's on the ballot
- Register to vote
- Update your voter registration
- Where to vote

# Inyo County Elections

Kammi Foote, Registrar of Voters

Your Representatives | Clerk-Recorder | Voter registration | Candidates/Voter File | Military/Overseas voting | What's new

Please note, as of March 17, the Inyo County Election's office is closed to all walk-in traffic, until the Covid-19 health emergency has been lifted.

**Election results**

**Next election: November 3, 2020**

**What's on the ballot**

**Did you get my ballot?**

# What is plain design?

When you publish content using plain design, readers can quickly and easily find the information they need.

# Plain design guidelines

- Include white space to make content manageable
- Use menus and headings effectively
- Use lists where appropriate
- Align content to the left of the page
- Use a sans serif font that is at least 12 point size
- Use strong contrast between text color and background

# ~~Beautiful & interesting~~
# Plain & helpful

# What is plain language?

Plain language is writing designed to ensure the reader understands as quickly, easily, and completely as possible.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plain_language

# Why is plain language important?

- Reaches people with low literacy
- Increases accessibility
- Avoids misunderstandings
- Creates transparency
- Builds trust between you and the public

# Before

If that oval is not marked, your vote cannot be counted for the candidate.

# After

You must fill in the oval for your vote to count.

Source: Center for Civic Design

# Simple word substitutions

| Instead of: | Try: |
| --- | --- |
| Utilize | Use |
| Assist | Help |
| Implement | Start |
| In the event of | If |
| Disclose | Show |
| Verify | Make sure |

# Plain language guidelines

- Write in the positive
- Use active rather than passive voice
- Address the reader directly
- Use short words, short sentences, and short sections
- Use the words voters will be looking for, and avoid jargon

# Let’s practice writing in plain language

Take 3 minutes to improve the following text, then we’ll share what we came up with.

If you are unable to locate your voter registration information but think you are registered to vote and you have not moved outside of your county of prior registration, you may be eligible to cast a provisional ballot during in-person absentee voting period at an appropriate early voting location or the county board of elections, or on Election Day at the correct polling place for your current address that may be counted.

## Instead of:

If you are unable to locate your voter registration information but think you are registered to vote and you have not moved outside of your county of prior registration, you may be eligible to cast a provisional ballot during in person absentee voting period at an appropriate early voting location or the county board of elections, or on Election Day at the correct polling place for your current address that may be counted.

## Try:

Please make sure your name and address for your voter registration are up-to-date.

If your information is not current, you may be asked to vote a provisional ballot.

Contact our election office so we can help you create a smooth voting plan for the next election!

# Why use plain design and plain language on your election website?

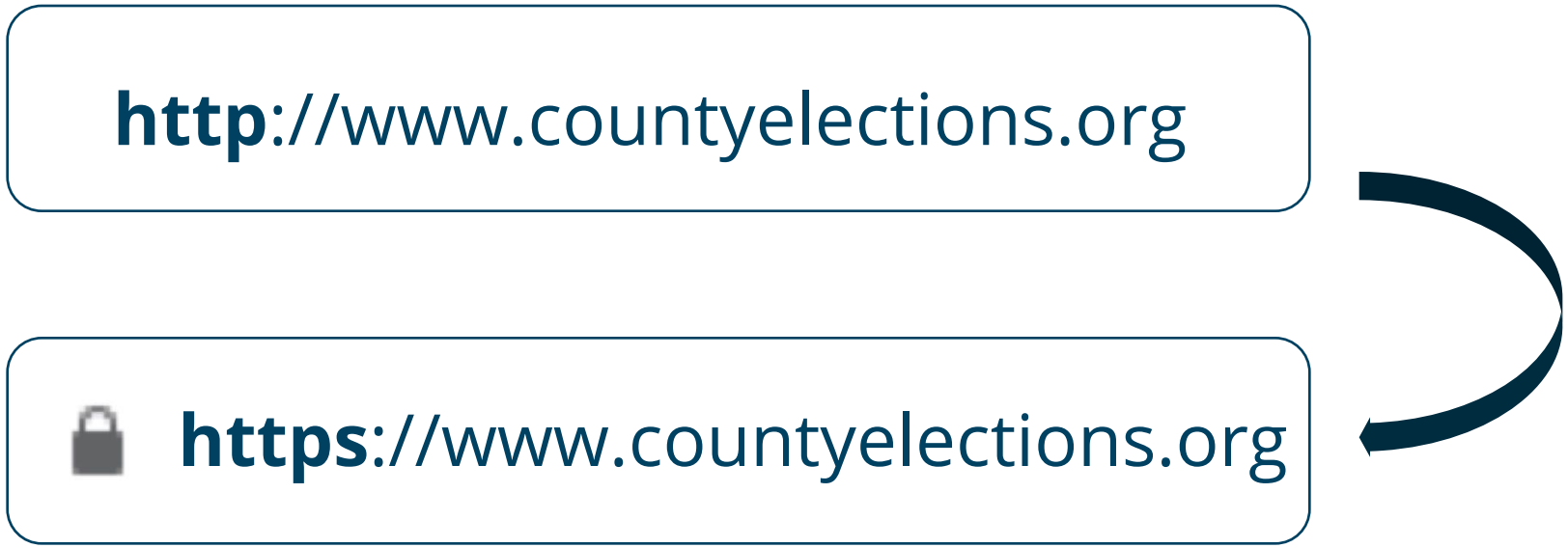
Make it easy for people to **find** information

Make it easy for people to **understand** information

New technical considerations

# STEPS TO BOOST TRUST IN YOUR WEBSITE

# Add HTTPS

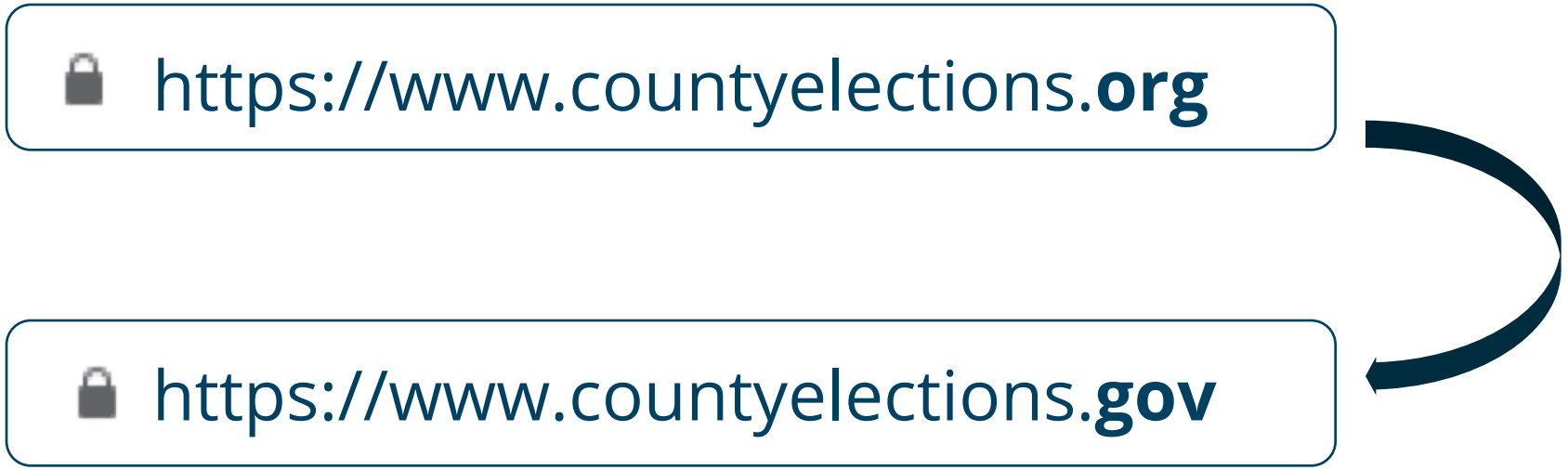



Adding Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (**HTTPS**) protects visitors to your website.

# Get started with HTTPS

- Partner with your county IT or website vendor
- Obtain security certificate for about $100 per year
- Visit https://https.cio.gov/ for more information

# Move to .gov domain




Moving to .gov helps your website visitors identify your site as official and trusted.

# Get started with .gov domain

- Partner with your county IT or website vendor
- Complete required domain registration documents
- Obtain domain registration for $400 per year
- Visit https://home.dotgov.gov/ for more information

# Test mobile friendliness

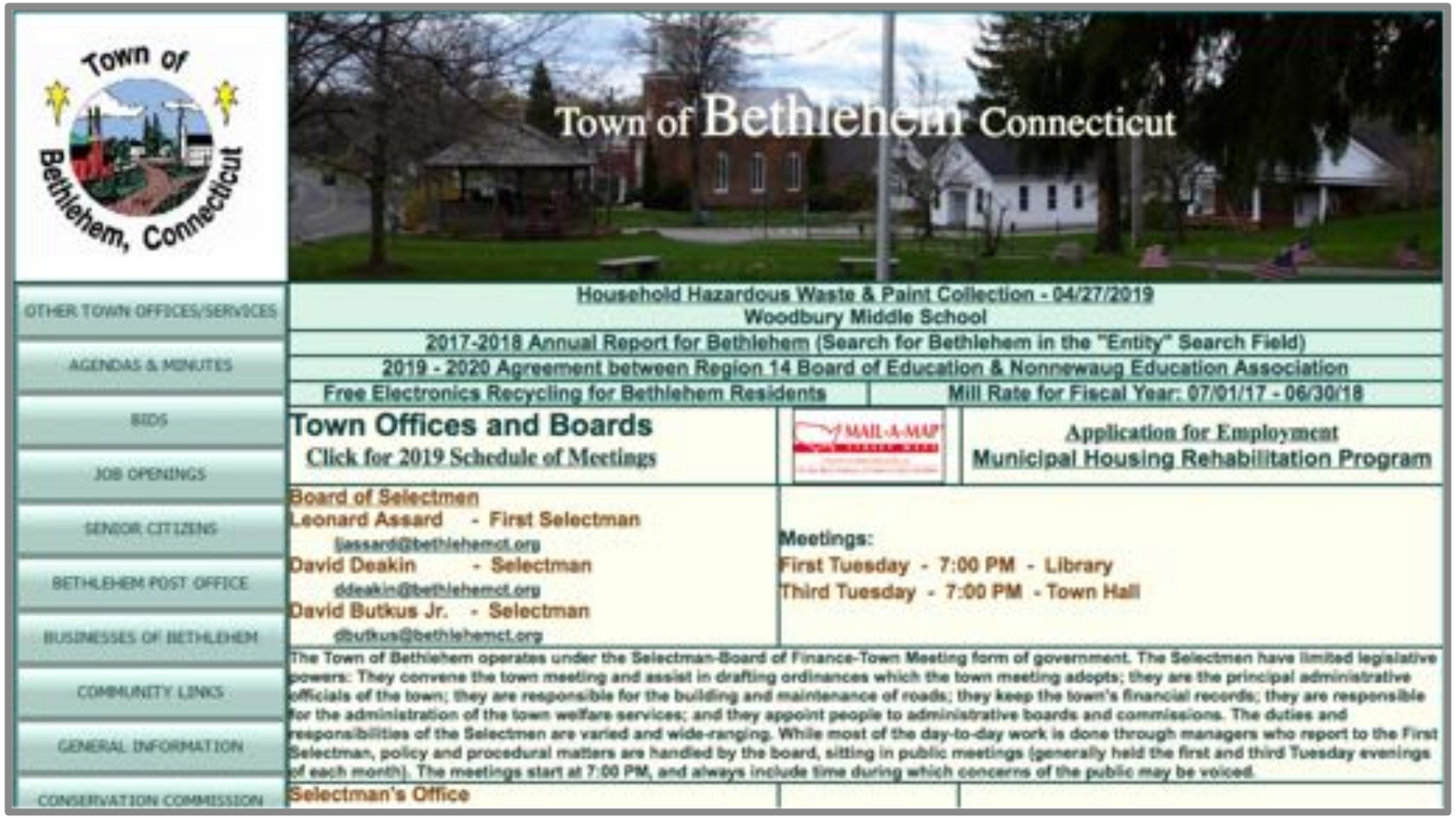
# Get started with mobile friendliness

- Test on mobile devices
- Partner with your county IT or website vendor
- Visit https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly for more information

Putting it all together

# 6 TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR ELECTION WEBSITE

# Simplify

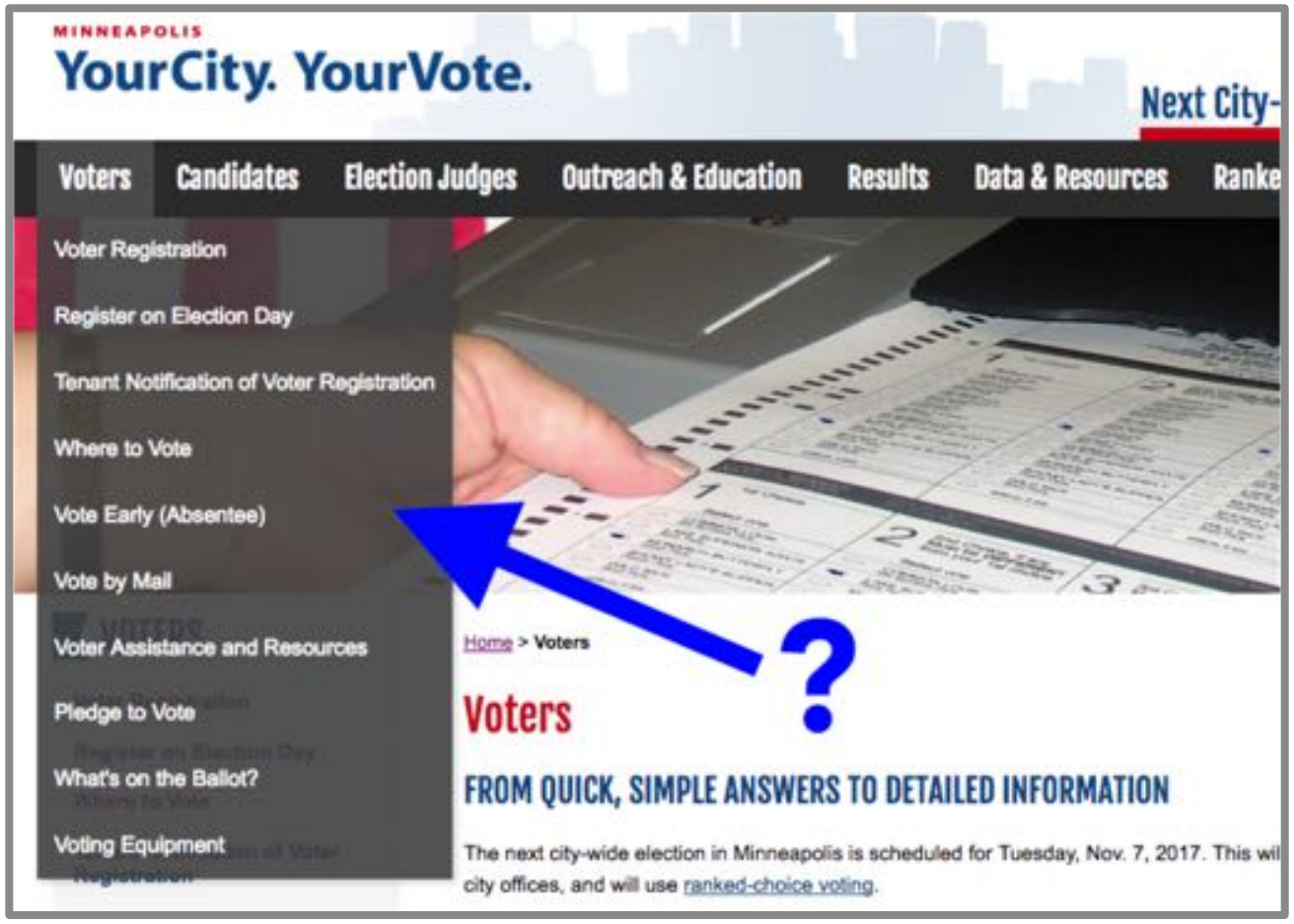

Town of Bethlehem, Connecticut
Town of Bethlehem Connecticut
OTHER TOWN OFFICES/SERVICES
AGENDAS & MINUTES
BIDS
JOB OPENINGS
SENIOR CITIZENS
BETHLEHEM POST OFFICE
BUSINESSES OF BETHLEHEM
COMMUNITY LINKS
GENERAL INFORMATION
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Household Hazardous Waste & Paint Collection - 04/27/2019
Woodbury Middle School
2017-2018 Annual Report for Bethlehem (Search for Bethlehem in the "Entity" Search Field)
2019 - 2020 Agreement between Region 14 Board of Education & Nonnewaug Education Association
Free Electronics Recycling for Bethlehem Residents
Mill Rate for Fiscal Year: 07/01/17 - 06/30/18
Town Offices and Boards
Click for 2019 Schedule of Meetings
MAIL-A-MAP
Application for Employment
Municipal Housing Rehabilitation Program
Board of Selectmen
Leonard Assard - First Selectman
lassard@bethlehemct.org
David Deakin - Selectman
ddeakin@bethlehemct.org
David Butkus Jr. - Selectman
dbutkus@bethlehemct.org
Meetings:
First Tuesday - 7:00 PM - Library
Third Tuesday - 7:00 PM - Town Hall
The Town of Bethlehem operates under the Selectman-Board of Finance-Town Meeting form of government. The Selectmen have limited legislative powers: They convene the town meeting and assist in drafting ordinances which the town meeting adopts; they are the principal administrative officials of the town; they are responsible for the building and maintenance of roads; they keep the town's financial records; they are responsible for the administration of the town welfare services; and they appoint people to administrative boards and commissions. The duties and responsibilities of the Selectmen are varied and wide-ranging. While most of the day-to-day work is done through managers who report to the First Selectman, policy and procedural matters are handled by the board, sitting in public meetings (generally held the first and third Tuesday evenings of each month). The meetings start at 7:00 PM, and always include time during which concerns of the public may be voiced.
Selectman's Office

# Let your menu do the work

# Cut redundant content

# Use clear terminology

# Answer voters' top questions



# Boost trust

https

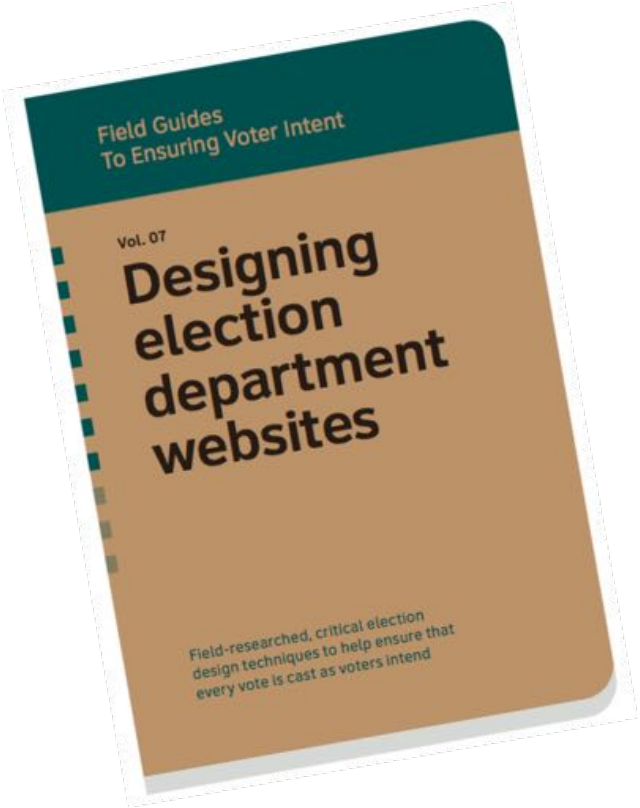
.gov

Additional support to improve your election website

# ELECTION WEBSITE RESOURCES

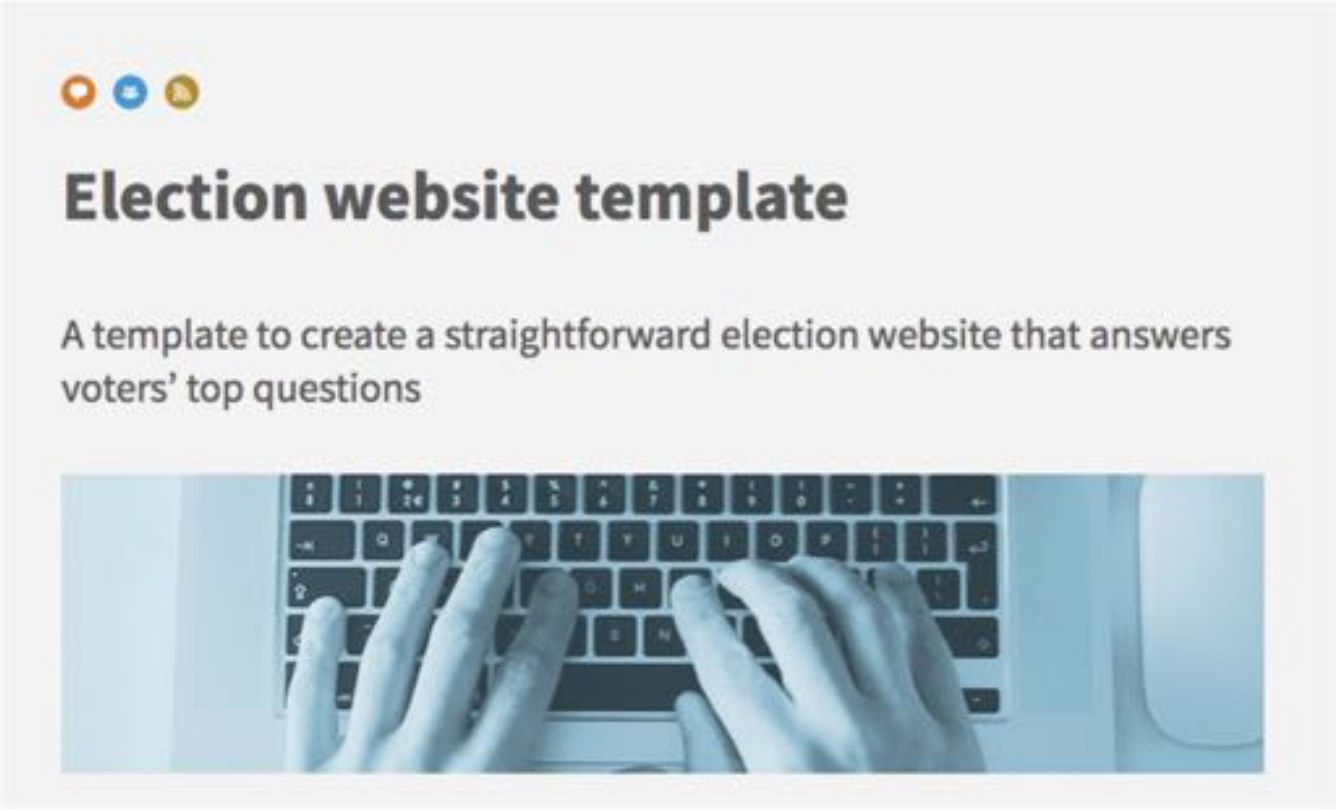
CENTER FOR TECH AND CIVIC LIFE

# Center for Civic Design field guide



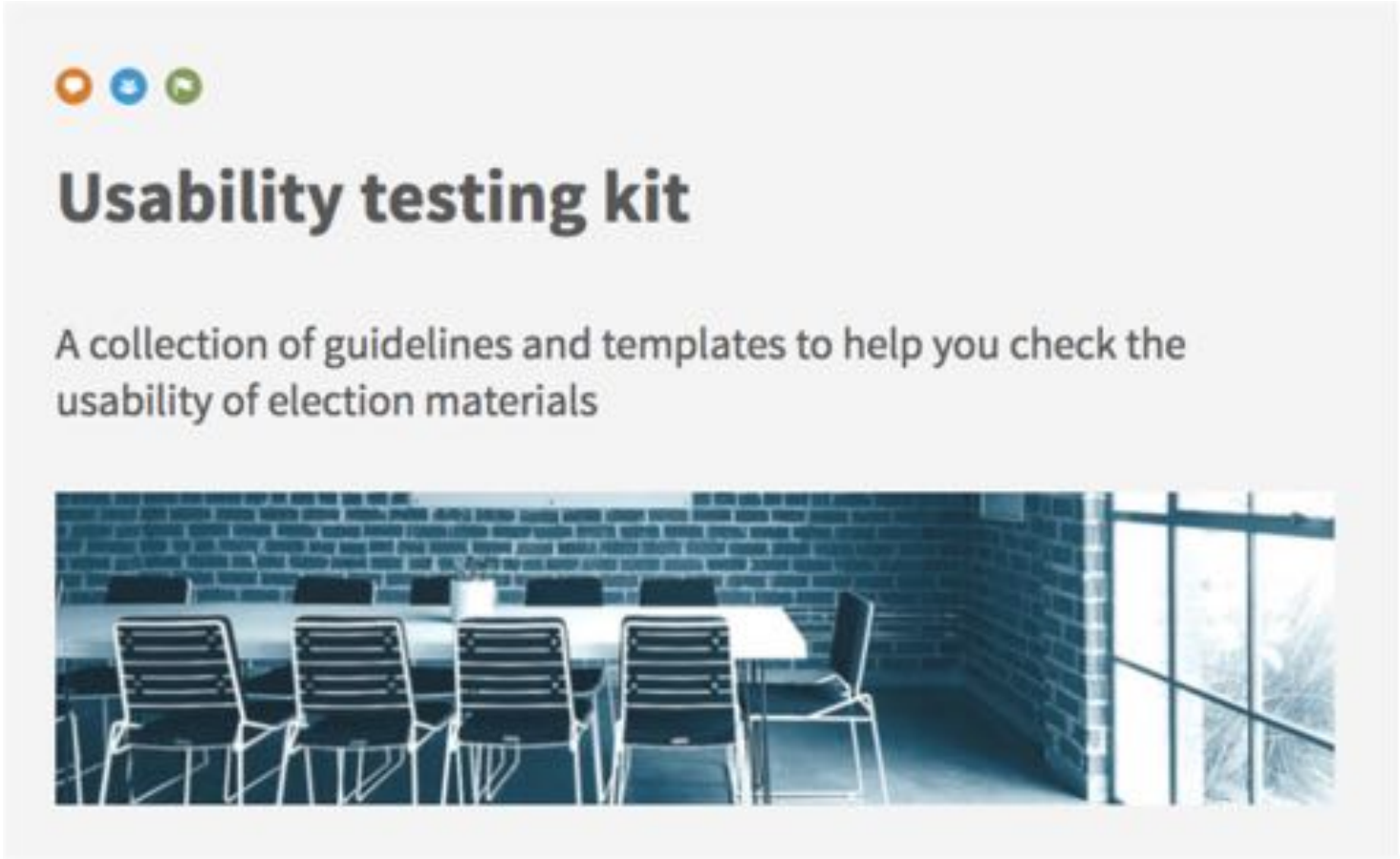

https://civicdesign.org/fieldguides/

# Build your own site using our template




https://electiontools.org/tool/election-website-template

# Usability testing kit




https://electiontools.org/tool/usability-testing-kit

# DISCUSSION

CENTER FOR TECH AND CIVIC LIFE

# Discussion questions

- What resonated with you from today’s course? Any “ah-ha” moments?
- What are your next steps?

# Discussion questions

- What questions do you have about what we covered today?
- What questions do you have about what we didn’t cover today?

We’ve covered a lot of ground

# WRAPPING UP

CENTER FOR
TECH AND
CIVIC LIFE

# Today’s objectives

- Identify the top civic information people are looking for online
- Apply principles of plain language and design to your website
- Prioritize methods for building trust with your voters online

# Communicating Trusted Election Information

**Accessible Communications for Election Offices**
Tuesday, May 12th | 2pm EST

**Social Media for Voter Engagement**
Thursday, May 14th | 2pm EST

Later this summer...
**Combating Election Misinformation**
Thursday, July 30th | 2pm EST

techandciviclife.org/course/trusted-info/

# Free COVID-19 Webinars for Election Officials

- May 19 – June 30
- 2 webinars per week (except June 2)
- 60 minutes each, with plenty of time for Q&A
- Sessions are stand-alone: register for what's useful to you
- We'll post the captioned recordings and slides after each webinar

techandciviclife.org/covid-19-webinars/

# What was your experience with today’s course?

- A brief survey is linked in the chat box.
- Please complete the survey now to provide feedback and improve the course for future participants.

# Thank you!

Email: hello@techandciviclife.org
Twitter: @HelloCTCL
Website: www.techandciviclife.org
#TrustedInfo2020

CENTER FOR TECH AND CIVIC LIFE