

Curbside Voting Project

2016 General Election Early Voting/Election Day Drive-By Review

FINAL REPORT

BACKGROUND

Collin County Democrats With Disabilities (CCDWD) partnered with Bruce Sherbet, Collin County Elections Administrator, and a coalition of non-profit nonpartisan advocacy organizations to address potential accessibility problems for voters with disabilities. Disability Rights Texas, Texas Civil Rights Project, REACH of Plano Center for Independent Living, and Prosumers of Plano recruited volunteers to drive by each vote center during early voting and on Election Day. The objective: to spot problems early and fix them quickly.

THE PROCESS

CCDWD created an app. for the volunteers to load to their web-enabled devices. For each vote center on their list, reviewers answered Yes or No to these questions:

1. Was parking space reserved for curbside voter?
2. Was proper signage posted?

If the answer to either or both questions was “No”, reviewers were instructed to immediately report the location with a description of the issue to the Elections Department, and record a summary of action taken on the app. The app was linked to a spreadsheet that enabled the Project Administrators to track the progress of each reviewer and assist if needed in real time.

Thirty four Early Voting and 45 of the 73 Election Day vote centers were reviewed. In general, volunteers conducted reviews at the beginning of the voting day (ideally during the first 30 minutes of the polls opening).

Of those, volunteers noted that 10 Early Voting vote centers did not have the designated parking space and/or the proper signage for the parking space. Volunteers reported their findings to the election office for follow-up and correction.

There were 73 Election Day vote centers with 45 sites reviewed by the volunteers. Seventeen (17) locations had issues with signage and 15 had no parking space reserved for curbside voting. Volunteers reported their findings to the election office for follow-up and correction.

ANALYSIS

Some of the issues were due to:

- lack of understanding by election workers regarding where/how the new signage should be posted
- other issues pertained to the site itself, e.g. distance between election workers and handicap parking, how a parking space could be created

PATH FORWARD

CCDWD meet with Collin County Elections to recommend the following:

- Continue drive-by review project during 2017-2018 election cycles
- Include disability representation on the Collin County Election Board
- Include ADA requirements/discussion in election worker training especially acceptable ways to create handicap parking spaces, proper posting of curbside voting signage

https://www.ada.gov/ada_voting/voting_solutions_ta/polling_place_solutions.htm

- Maintain on-going relationship with Collin County Elections Department