

## Legislative Change

The 2023 Minnesota State Legislature passed amendments to 203B.081, Location and Methods for Absentee Voting In-Person:

Subd. 4. Temporary locations. (a) A county auditor or municipal clerk authorized under section 203B.05 to administer voting before election day may designate additional polling places with days and hours that differ from those required by section 203B.085. A designation authorized by this subdivision must be made at least 47 days before the election. The county auditor or municipal clerk must provide notice to the secretary of state at the time that the designations are made.

They also made changes to the subdivision which governs direct balloting. Through this process, voters are able to insert their ballot directly into a tabulator (just like on Election Day) to be counted on Election Night.

Subd. 3. Alternative procedure. (a) In elections not eligible to use early voting under subdivision 1a, the county auditor may make available a ballot counter and ballot box for use by the voters during the 18 days before the election.

Prior to these legislative changes, any additional Early Voting site was required to be open for the full 46-day absentee voting period, or for the previous 7-day direct balloting period. Also, the alternate facility would have to have hours matching those of the main site.

The City of Minneapolis continues to be a leader in election administration in the State of Minnesota, and as such we were pleased to offer the first pop-up voting event allowed under state statute.



*2023 Pop-Up Voting Team - Manager Aaron Grossman, Charles Piehl, Peter Rusk, Ezra Jackson-Smith, Watson, Haroon Rasheed, Justice TenEyck, Joe Schluender, Lesley Arimah, Kristine Pappone, U of M Volunteer Not Pictured: Lorna Biddle, Isaac Hudson Foy, Angie Courchaine*

## Historical Early Voting Sites

### 2016

In 2013, the Minnesota Legislature passed “No Excuse Absentee Voting”. Prior to enactment, individuals wishing to vote ahead of Election Day would have to declare that they were physically unable to go to their Election Day polling place due to illness, travel, etc. This change went into effect for the 2014 Gubernatorial Election and rapidly contributed to increases in those voting ahead of Election Day. 2016 was the first Presidential Election under this new statute.

In 2015, the Minnesota Legislature first enacted a 7-day direct balloting period in the week leading up to Election Day.

With the introduction of these two new laws, the City of Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services decided to open three satellite early vote centers for the 2016 Presidential Election. These were in addition to the main site at the Community Services Building at 217 S 3<sup>rd</sup> St in downtown Minneapolis. All four of these locations were open for the full 46-Day absentee voting period.

Urban League – 2100 Plymouth Ave N  
Water Bar – 2516 Central Ave NE  
Roof Depot – 860 E 28<sup>th</sup> St

Voter turnout statistics showed that over 57% of voters participated during the final days, coinciding with the direct balloting period. For future elections, the decision was made to keep the main Early Vote Center open for the statutorily required full absentee period, but to open additional satellite sites for only the direct balloting timeframe.

## 2018

For the 2018 Gubernatorial Election, EVS operated the main downtown facility and three Satellite Early Vote Centers.

Urban League – 2100 Plymouth Ave N  
University of Minnesota Field House – 1800 University Ave SE  
Regents Assembly – 810 31<sup>st</sup> St W

## 2020

The 2020 Presidential General Election coincided with the COVID-19 Pandemic. Voters were strongly encouraged to vote by mail ballot to avoid exposure in the polling place. Extra safety precautions and protocols were in place during Early Voting.

Elections and Voter Services relocated to 980 E Hennepin Ave, and the main Early Vote Center operated from that facility. EVS also opened two Satellite Early Vote Sites:

Urban League – 2100 Plymouth Ave N  
Longfellow Park Rec Center – 3435 36<sup>th</sup> Ave S

With the influx of vote by mail, the need for additional sites for ballot drop-off increased. The following sites were available for ballot drop off during the last sixteen days of the election (in addition to voting sites):

Victory Memorial Ice Arena Parking Lot – 1900 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave N  
Firefighters Hall & Museum Parking Lot – 664 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave NE  
UROC Parking Lot – 2001 Plymouth Ave N  
Minneapolis Convention Center – 1301 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S  
Kmart Parking Lot – 10 W Lake St  
St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church Parking Lot – 3450 Irving Ave S  
Bethel Lutheran Church Parking Lot – 4120 S 17<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Mount Olivet Lutheran Church Parking Lot – 5025 Knox Ave S  
Bossen Field Park Parking Lot – 5701 S 28<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Northrop Memorial Auditorium – 84 Church St SE  
Longfellow Park Rec Center – 3435 36<sup>th</sup> Ave S

## 2022

For the 2022 Gubernatorial Election, EVS operated three additional sites along with their main facility at 980 E Hennepin:

Urban League – 2100 Plymouth Ave N  
Bethel Lutheran Church – 4120 S 17<sup>th</sup> Ave  
South Minneapolis Service Center – 2215 E Lake St

## Voter Participation/Voter Turnout Contributing Factors

The Census regularly provides data estimates of the Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP). There are currently 243,000 registered voters in Minneapolis. CVAP estimates show there are 322,700 citizens residing in Minneapolis who are over 18 years of age. **There are 79,000 eligible voters who are not participating in the process.**

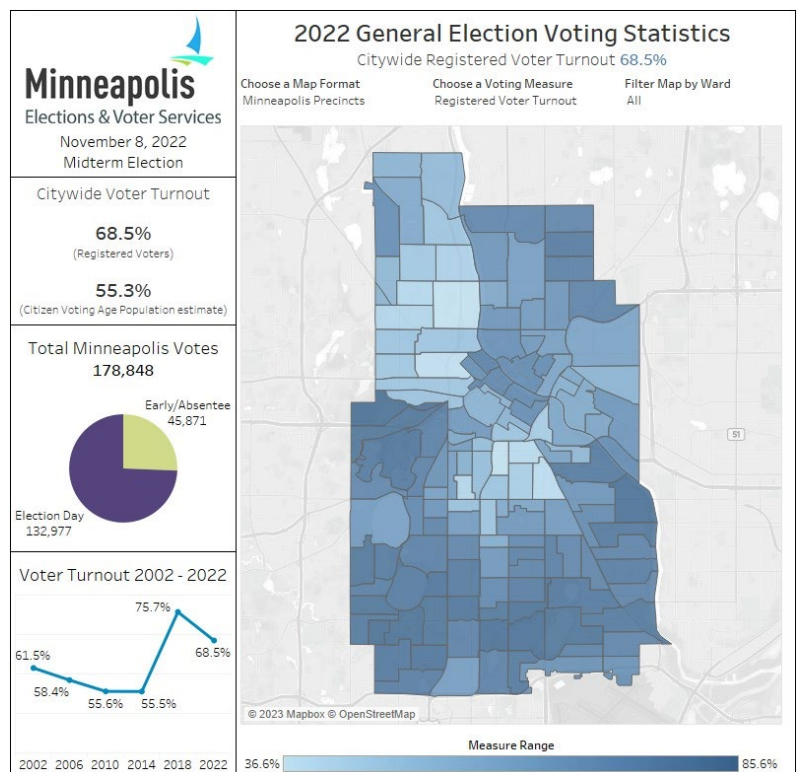
Research has shown that individuals who are eligible, but do not vote are more likely to be from households that are:

- Non-English-only
- Lower income
- Non-college educated
- Non-homeowner occupied (Rental)
- Non-white
- Younger

## EVC Effects on Turnout

A plethora of factors affect turnout in a given area, EVC location is only one of these components. The type of election and races/questions on the ballot drive voter interest. With the differing election types, changes to Election Law, the effects of the pandemic, and redistricting, it is nearly impossible to track specifically the effects one voting facility or initiative have on voter turnout.

However, we know that voting ease, proximity, and accessibility are factors that contribute to increases in turnout. And, we can theorize that moving a method of voting into an area would then have a positive correlation to participation. We can see from the placement of the South Minneapolis Service Center in 2022 that the precincts directly surrounding the facility were associated with a pocket of high participation.



## 2023 Pilot

### 2023 Municipal Election

Municipal seats are regularly 4-year terms. Once every twenty years, any seat that is elected by Ward and not elected at-large must run for re-election (following the census and re-districting). This rule

exists so that residents may select their representative in Council in their new district in which they reside. The 2023 Municipal Election was this unique circumstance which called for a Council-only election for two-year terms. No ballot questions were properly filed, and no Special elections were called, so the only item that residents saw on their ballot when they voted was their Council seat.

The following candidates ran for office in 2023:

- Ward 1: Elliott Payne, Edwin B. Fruit
- Ward 2: Robin Wonsley, Michael Baskins (declared write-in)
- Ward 3: Marcus Mills, Michael Rainville
- Ward 4: LaTrisha M Vetaw, Angela Williams, Marvina Haynes, Leslie Davis
- Ward 5: Jeremiah Bey Ellison, Victor Martinez, Phillip “OMac” Peterson
- Ward 6: Jamal Osman, Tiger Worku, Kayseh Magan, Guy T Gaskin
- Ward 7: Scott Graham, Katie Cashman, Kenneth C. Foxworth
- Ward 8: Andrea Jenkins, Soren Stevenson, Bob Sullentrop, Terry White
- Ward 9: Jason Chavez, Daniel Orban
- Ward 10: Nasri Warsame, Bruce Dachis, Aisha Chughtai, Greg Kline
- Ward 11: Emily Koski, Gabrielle M. Prosser
- Ward 12: Luther Ranheim, Aurin Chowdhury, Nancy Ford
- Ward 13: Kate Mortenson, Linea Palmisano, Bob “Again” Carney Jr, Zach Metzger

Given the size of the election and the level to which races near campus were contested, Elections & Voter Services predicted that there would be a lower turnout for this initial pilot of this new voting method. Being able to trial this new method in a smaller, slower atmosphere was one of the reasons this year’s Municipal was selected. Future voting events at the University of Minnesota should anticipate higher volumes of voting.

### Site Selection

EVS selected the University of Minnesota as an ideal location for this initial pilot. Finding a facility at the University proved to be the most challenging aspect of planning. Each individual site on campus is independently managed and must be independently reserved. Finding the right connections proved to be arduous. We were able to secure Weisman Art Museum (already an Election Day poll) due to our ongoing relationship with that facility. Should Elections & Voter Services move to a mobile voting model, these issues will be eliminated, as the parking on campus is all centrally maintained and reserved.

### Voter Outreach & Education Plans

Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services met with connections at the U of M in Student Government, Diversity Equity and Inclusion, Off-Campus Living, Public Engagement, Off-Campus Public Engagement, Community Engaged Learning, and Civic Engagement to discuss opportunities to engage with the campus community, prior even to the passage of the new law. Each group was energized when the new law passed to help bring voting to campus.

Outreach with the University poses unique challenges. Undergraduate Student Government is one of the key connections, but leadership within Student Government changes with student attrition. We were lucky to have consistency this year. It’s key to future plans to recognize that the team we are starting out working with, may not be the team we end up working with. Also, the times of year when

EVS has extra capacity coincides with students being on break, so planning needs to start early, prior to the end of the previous school calendar year.

Undergraduate Student Government organized a tabling event “Voterpalooza” with registration and information on voting on Thursday, October 12. Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services attended along with USG. The day was cold and raining, but over 50 students stopped by the outdoor tabling event in front of Northrup, and 25 individuals registered to vote. Undergraduate Student Government also created their own student voter guides which they distributed electronically and handed out in person at Voterpalooza. U of M communications included information in their newsletters to staff in the days before the voting event.

Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services sent media releases and advertised the event on social media. We also created outreach stickers that student organizers could hand out ahead of voting and during voting hours.



As Halloween coincided with the selected date, we tied the time of year to outreach for the event.

The best treat this Halloween is an “I Voted” sticker!

We’re having a “boo”-last at Weisman!

Why did the pumpkin run for office? Because he wanted to Squash the competition!

Voting today at Weisman is a “Fang”-tastic idea!

## Voting Day



*First Voter – A student volunteer casts the first ballot of the event at the Weisman Art Museum.*

The 2023 Weisman Art Museum pop-up operated from 11am-5pm. The museum itself was closed that day. Student volunteers were organized by University of Minnesota's Undergraduate Student Government to supplement Elections & Voter Services staff. Students greeted voters outside of the event, directed voters inside of Weisman, and helped pass out stickers and thank voters as they exited the facility.

The Weisman 2023 Pop-Up served 95 voters, including at least one from every ward. The site saw just under 16 voters per hour, and 11.5% were election day registrations (EDRs). For comparison, the main Early Vote Center (EVC) that day saw 25 voters per hour with 4.5% being election day registrations. 23% of voters were from Ward 2, including approximately two thirds of EDR voters. The next two most common Wards were 12 (21%) and Ward 3 (9.5%), both of which directly abut Ward 2 and also tend to have high turnout at the main EVC.

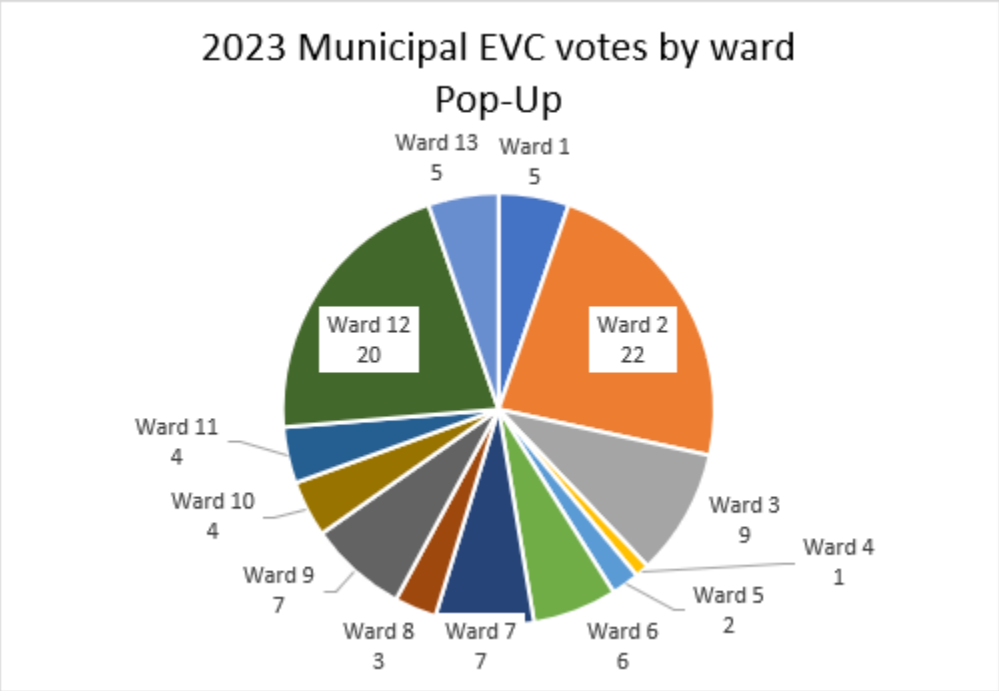
Given the lower overall turnout of this municipal election, the presence of only one named candidate for the Ward 2 race, and the fact this was the first pop-up, low turnout was predicted for the site. 95 voters was roughly double optimistic internal EVS projections. The presence of voters from every precinct was a very positive outcome and indicative of the wide draw of the U of M campus across the city.

Due to the demands of operating the main EVC site and the pop-up being only one day, EVS drew from a wide pool of people for staffing. Multiple individuals from other EVS departments (Mail, Training, Voter Outreach, etc.) were on site to staff non-SVRS positions. Seven EVC staff were on site to operate SVRS and provide supervision. U of M Student Government also provided several volunteers to help with greeting, wayfinding, and other non-technical duties. Tuesday was intentionally chosen as a day with lower EVC volume and very low Mail volume to allow cross-staffing of two sites.

Staff arrived on site two hours before voting opened to do set up, which was substantially complete within an hour. Earlier site visits and experience as a polling place made the process smooth. A reduced list of supplies and equipment from satellite sites was used. To minimize supply load, ballot-on-demand was used with preprinted ballots from anticipated popular wards stocked as a backup. The site was torn down and packed out within an hour of the end of voting.



*Students pose at the entrance to the Early Vote Center in Weisman Art Museum.*



## 2024 Plans

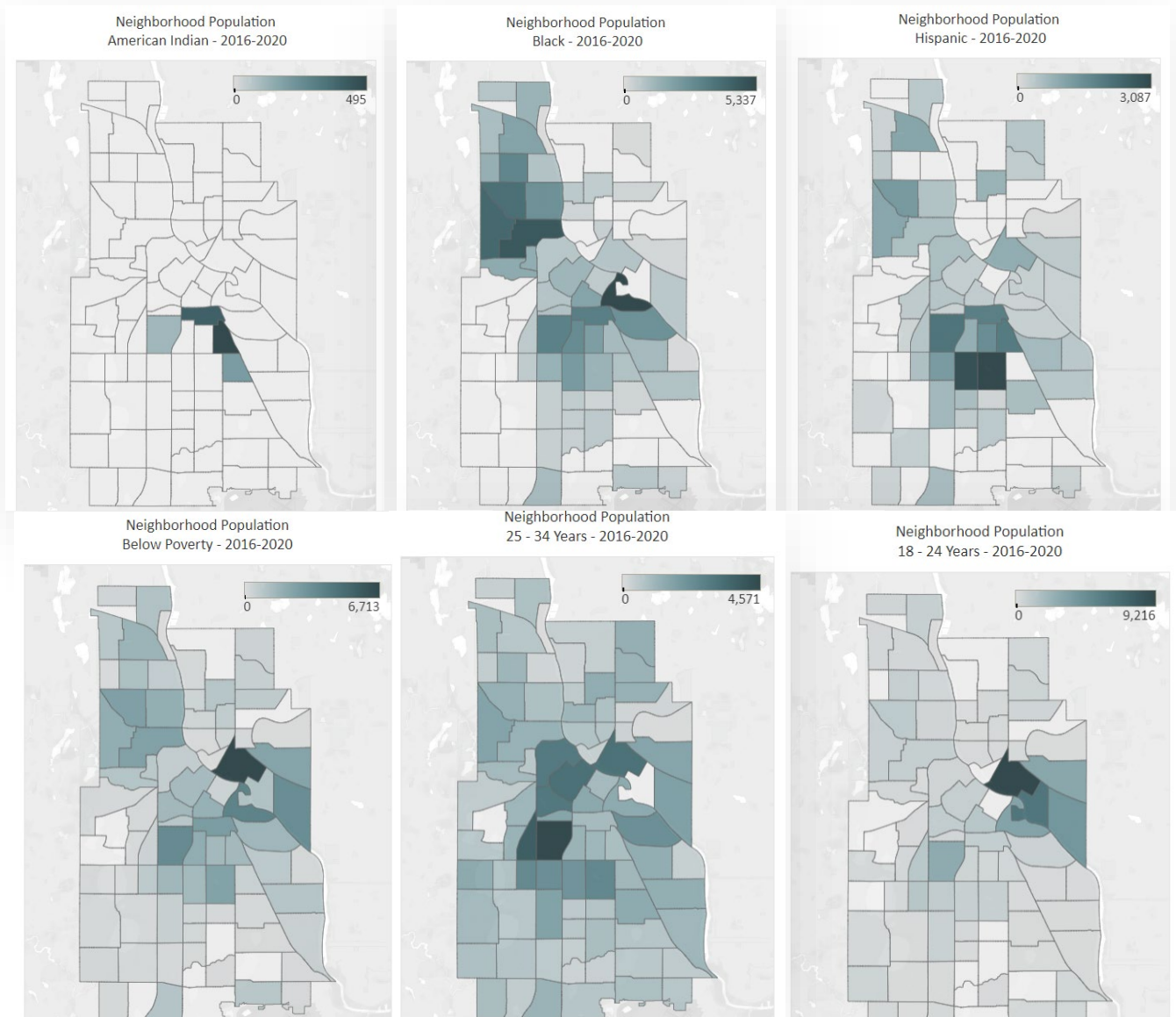
### Evaluation Considerations

Key factors that were considered in the selection of Early Voting “pop-up” sites for 2024 include:

1. Geography
2. Turnout
3. CVAP Data & Underserved Communities
4. Expressed Need
5. Access & Facilities

In analysis of item #3, we looked at contributing factors available in the City of Minneapolis neighborhood demographic information.





## Site Selection

Elections & Voter Services will continue to operate their main site for the full absentee voting period and will continue Satellite Early Vote Sites at Urban League and Bethel. These Satellite Early Vote Sites will expand hours to 10-days in lieu of 7 to offer voters two full weekends of voting at those sites.

It is key that Elections & Voter Services fairly select Early Voting sites using established criteria. Voter access and participation must remain the driving force, keeping in mind staff capacity to administer these events.

Elections & Voter Services sought out partnership with the Arts & Cultural Affairs Department in finding accessible sites with adequate space. The following sites were ultimately selected:

- University of Minnesota (W2-P4)
- Capri Theater (W5-P2)
- Farview Park (W5-P3)
  - Hmong language need
- Higher Ground Evergreen Residence (W5-P9)
  - Evergreen houses 88 low-income individuals with ADA needs
  - Co-located with:
    - Shelter which houses 200 individuals
    - Glenwood houses 80 permanent individuals with prior substance use
    - Residential space which houses 85 permanent individuals
- Cedar Cultural Center (W6-P3)
  - Somali language need
- Grace-Trinity Community Church (W7-P9)
- Little Earth United Tribes (W9-P4)
- Pillsbury House + Theatre (W9-P2)
- Midtown Global Market (W9-P5)
  - Spanish language need
- Minneapolis Institute of Art (W10-P9)
- Lynnhurst Park (W13-P11)

### Voter Outreach & Communication

Voter outreach initiatives will be uniquely developed for each individual site. Neighborhood & Community Services will be leveraged for recruitment of Election Judges who provide language support, and to attain additional translator. VOC has identified the following priorities as plans are under development:

- Existing community networks of the site
- Unique communications platforms and opportunities
- Individualized marketing resources and strategies
- Neighborhood association outreach