

VSAP

NEWSLETTER

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FUNDING UPDATE

The County has received authorization from the Voting Modernization Board (VMB) to utilize VMB prop 41 funds for expenses related to the VSAP Design and Engineering Phase.

MESSAGE FROM DEAN



The issues, challenges, and opportunities associated with voter engagement and participation in the communities that make up Los Angeles County are extremely important and timely.

It is my strong belief that increased voter participation is founded on an accessible electoral process that eliminates barriers and reduces the effort and resources

necessary for an eligible citizen to register to vote.

Increased access to the voter registration process, as well as the options available to cast a ballot are critical to fostering an environment conducive to higher voter participation. It is absolutely incumbent upon those of us charged with the administration of elections to expand and modify the process to ensure ease and access to voting.

The Voting Systems Assessment Project (VSAP) is critical to addressing the shifting election landscape. As more jurisdictions seek to consolidate their elections, we must adapt to meet the needs of local communities. Los Angeles County has taken on that challenge in an effort to modernize our voting system based on a voter-centered design and development model that will result in voting equipment that is sustainable, secure, and transparent, while at the same time, agile enough to adapt to changing voter preferences, advancements in technology, and shifting demographics.

This newsletter is designed to keep members of both the VSAP Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee up-to-date on our Voting Systems Assessment Project developments. This newsletter will be sent to you on a quarterly basis, and provide highlights of our project progress. As an important contributor to this process, I want to ensure that you are informed of project developments and milestones. To this purpose, I will be providing you project highlights and status updates through this quarterly report.

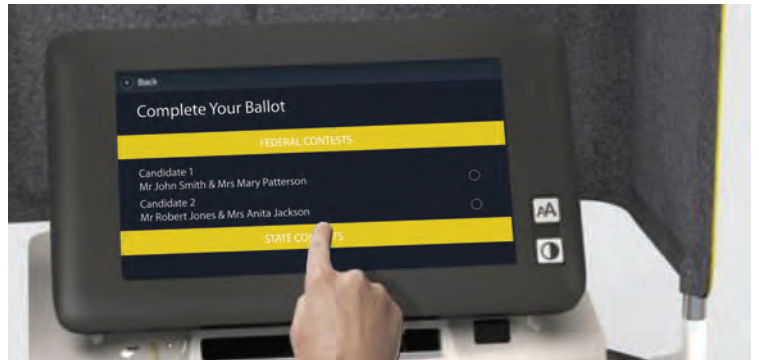
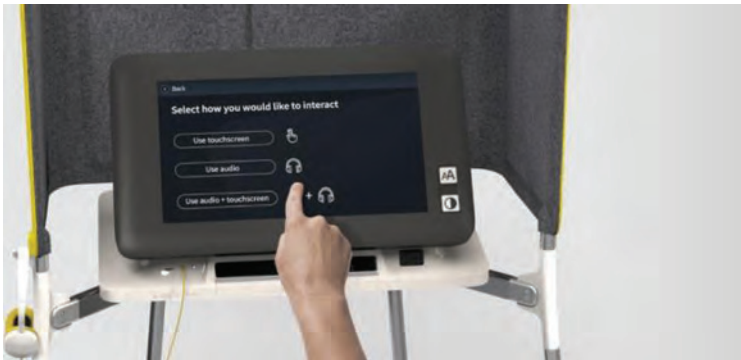
DEAN C. LOGAN

KICKING OFF THE ENGINEERING PHASE

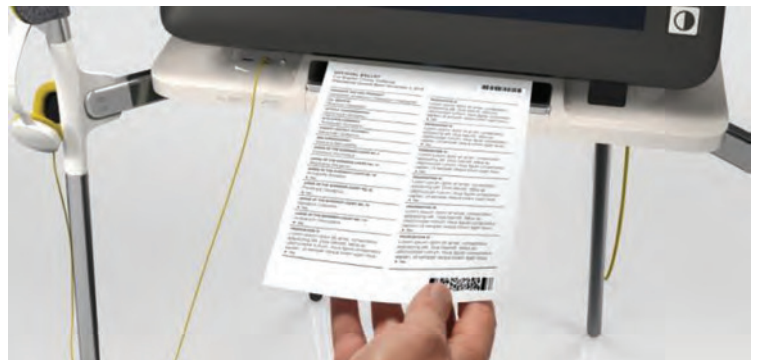
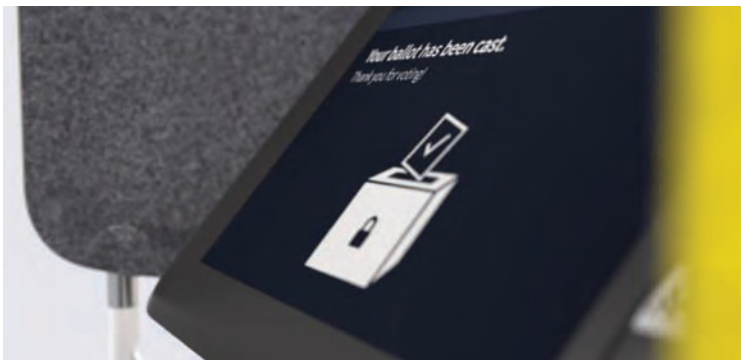
The engineering phase of the VSAP officially kicked off on November 21, 2014. This phase marks a significant shift in the focus of the overall VSAP as we transition from research, ideation and preliminary design to more detailed design, engineering and specifications. We continue to partner with IDEO in this phase of the project.



While work in this phase is still centered on the voting experience and the engineering of the proposed Ballot Marking Device, the scope of the design and specifications are expanded to include a holistic, enterprise perspective of the new voting system and other key system components, such as tally, vote-by-mail, and an interactive sample ballot. The specifications developed during this phase will support a competitive solicitation of the future build and manufacturing of the system.



Following the kick-off meeting, IDEO and their partners (Digital Foundry and Cambridge Consultants) held a series of in-person meetings and conference calls with subject matter experts within the Registrar-Recorder County Clerk, the County Chief Information Office, our Technical Advisory Committee and the VSAP Advisory Committee, to further define the requirements of the new voting system, as well as set the stage for the direction of the design and testing of the prototypes to be developed throughout the phase.



THE LATEST ON AGILE PROCESS AND SYSTEM ENGINEERING



The IDEO team and staff from the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk met in January to conduct an Agile workshop and to begin the process of defining the hardware and software architecture of the new voting system.

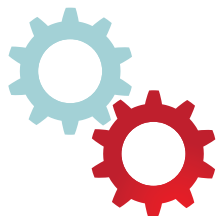
What Is Agile?

Agile is a group of project management and software development methods in which requirements and solutions evolve through extensive collaboration between cross-functional teams and project stakeholders. Agile emphasizes adaptive planning, evolutionary development, early delivery, and continuous incremental improvement and movement toward project goals and priorities. It encourages rapid and flexible response to change using frequent iterations through prototype development, testing, and feedback cycles until the desired solution is achieved.

Through this collaborative and iterative process, designers and stakeholders can make key decisions in a timely manner, keeping the project on track while producing deliverables that meet requirements and expectations. To be successful, however, Agile requires us to actively participate and to agree on critical decisions. As such, we will need time and expertise of both our VSAP Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee members to help maintain the momentum of the project, and to ensure the needs of the voters are met. We will be depending on you to help make timely evaluations and recommendations that will help inform and shape the project direction and provide accountability and transparency.

Solidifying System Engineering

In January, we began to refine and solidify system requirements.



A lot of this groundwork was conducted during an Architecture Workshop led by IDEO from January 28-30. During workshop sessions, IDEO met with RR/CC staff and available members of our Technical Advisory Committee to discuss architectural design elements. As a result of this collaboration, we have developed a baseline understanding of what the system should look like and how it should behave, and have identified next steps in our system engineering process to test and validate assumptions and requirements.

As we progress forward, we may ask committee members to provide feedback on variety of areas including:

- Bilingual ballots
- Secure USB ports

We anticipate a wide variety of topics and questions to arise from our collaboration with IDEO. Your input is essential.

USER TESTING CONTINUES TO SHOW PROMISING RESULTS



In an effort to gain useful information on usability and accessibility of potential design directions, we have conducted a series of user research sessions in the past few months.

On February 5, 27 and March 26 we conducted in-depth user testing that revealed opportunities within the voting experience. Participants who took part in the studies were purposely recruited for their diversity of experience and ability. Voters with visual impairments, seniors with minimal technical experience, Spanish-speakers and millennials who have never voted were among the users who were studied.

Each research session includes a formal pre-screening and a follow-up interview with a series of questions that offer insight into the user's background and relationship to voting. These sessions were held at the IDEO Palo Alto location.

Voters with visual impairments took part in the user testing research the IDEO offices in Palo Alto on March 26.



Aspects of the prototype such as the accessibility, security and usability have been closely documented.

The sessions have provided us with the user's view of the most current prototype's settings, the integrated ballot box and how they compare to the InkaVote, currently used by the County. In addition, users with visual impairments have also been able to give feedback on the audio component of the new prototype as well as its usability for people living with disabilities.



User testing on March 26 focused on the audio component of the new voting system.

On April 29, 2015, we conducted further user-testing sessions in Los Angeles County focusing on election operations. Groups engaged in the process consisted of Election Operation Center staff, pollworkers, and trainers. We gathered feedback on their latest prototype iterations and discussed storage, transportation, set-up, and troubleshooting. The input received from both staff and pollworkers is integral to the next iteration, as the findings will continue to be translated into design plans.



User testing on April 29 focused on pollworkers, Election Operations Center staff, and trainers.

USER TESTING- MAY 26-30



Six user testing sessions took place throughout Los Angeles County from May 26-30 and engaged a diverse group of participants. The sessions focused on the following features of the prototypes: a touchscreen interface, audio user interface, sample keypads, voting in a language other than English, switching between languages during the voting process, privacy and security of the voting booth, storage, transportation, set up and break down of the polling booth, and much more. A variety of participants were invited to each user testing session. These participants consisted of, but were not limited to: people from a variety of age groups, people whose primary language is Spanish and/or Korean, persons with physical and/or cognitive disabilities, and military veterans.

Many voters from around Los Angeles County took part in the user-testing sessions from May-26-30.



Below is an overview of all user-testing sessions which have occurred in this phase of the project.

Date	Location	Number of Participants	Users	Session Focus
2/5	Bay Area	5	General population	In-process feedback on usability and accessibility
2/27	Bay Area	57	Spanish speakers, seniors	User interface, overall design, in-process feedback, comparison study
3/26	Bay Area	5	Visually impaired	Audio experience
4/29	Norwalk, CA	22	Election workers	Transportation, storage, set-up, break-down
5/26	Altadena, CA	27	Seniors	User interface- usability, accessibility, audio ballot
5/28	Los Angeles, CA	40	Veterans with disabilities	User interface, usability, accessibility, audio ballot, remote key pad
5/28	Huntington Park, CA	39	Spanish speakers, visually impaired	User interface, usability, accessibility, audio ballot, language toggle, etc.
5/30	Los Angeles, CA	35	Korean speakers, young voters	User interface, usability, accessibility, audio ballot, language toggle, etc.
5/30	Norwalk, CA	39	General population	User interface- usability, accessibility, audio ballot, privacy, etc.

The reports from these and upcoming sessions will also be available later this year on the VSAP website.

COMMITTEE EVENTS

April 14, 2015 - Advisory Committee Meeting with RR/CC and IDEO

VSAP staff, IDEO, and the Advisory Committee met for a half-day to discuss the latest BMD prototype iteration, as well as conceptual prototypes. Members were presented the concepts and information on how the concepts were derived, and provided feedback.

April 16 & 17, 2015 Technical Advisory Committee Meeting with RR/CC and IDEO



VSAP team members, IDEO, Digital Foundry, and Technical Advisory Committee members met to discuss the latest design directions in terms of technical feasibility. These meetings took place in Tiburon and Palo Alto.

KEEPING AN EYE OUT ON NEW RESEARCH

We continue to investigate the concept of vote centers as a potential voting model for use with the new voting system. This has involved conference calls with multiple election jurisdictions around the country, researching published reports, and tracking the results of vote center implementations.

As a part of this research, we have begun to gather information regarding the tools necessary to implement vote centers. One of those tools being electronic pollbooks. As such, the RR/CC released a RFI to gather information regarding existing electronic pollbooks.

Our team is currently reviewing the responses to our RFI for electronic pollbooks and has shared the results with the IDEO team, which will use the information to ensure the ballot marking device will have the ability to interact with such devices.





SPREADING THE WORD

The RR/CC hosted the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Standards Association (IEEE) Voting Systems Standards Committee Annual Meeting on February 4-5. During this meeting Kenneth Bennett delivered a presentation on Election Business Process Modeling done by the Voting Systems Standards Committee (VSSC) as a basis for promoting a common national understanding of elections administration best practices, furthering the professionalization of election administration, and supporting the development of voting system data interoperability standards. Kenneth delivered a similar presentation at the NIST/EAC Future of Voting Systems Symposium in Washington D.C. on February 9-10, which was also attended by Dean Logan and Jeramy Gray.

Internal Project Team members Adrian Avelar, Tim McNamara, and Aaron Nevarez traveled to Denver the week of June 1, 2015 to observe voting center usage in a runoff election. Adrian Avelar also attended the National Conference of State Legislatures in New Mexico during the same week. On June 13, 2015 the VSAP team gave a presentation to the Native American Veterans Association in Southgate and demonstrated the latest prototype device. Our team also attended the City Clerk Summit on June 23 to keep local elected officials informed of the progress of the project

Our participation at these types of events is helping to shape and improve the voting landscape across the nation, and to ensure the VSAP is aligned with national voting system modernization trends.



IN THE NEWS

May 29, 2015- A New Digital Voting System, A Step Towards Greater Civic-Participation. (In Spanish)
<http://www.hoylosangeles.com/noticias/local/hoyla-loc-un-sistema-digital-para-votar-que-sea--story.html>

October 23, 2014- a 21st Century Voting System in Los Angeles
<http://www.latimes.com/opinion/editorials/la-ed-voting-touch-screen-los-angeles-county-20141024-story.html>

October 23, 2014- Can This Bureaucrat Get Young Citizens to Vote?
<http://www.scpr.org/news/2014/10/23/47525/can-this-bureaucrat-get-young-citizens-to-vote/>

October 22, 2014- Los Angeles County Moves Towards New Voting System
<http://www.scpr.org/news/2014/10/22/47583/los-angeles-county-moves-toward-voting-system-over/>

October 21, 2014-County Takes Steps Towards System Overhaul
<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-new-voting-system-20141021-story.html>



FUTURE MEETINGS-SAVE THE DATE

July 22, 2015: Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

July 23, 2015: Advisory Committee Meeting

More information regarding the Voting System Assessment Project (VSAP) is available at www.lavote.net/vsap. The pages on our website are frequently updated with news and information and are a great way to stay connected with the progress of the project between quarterly newsletters. We strongly encourage public input throughout the process and look forward to continuing to work with you on this critical project.