GIS Empowers LA County Vote Center Placement

OVERVIEW: The Vote Center GIS Suitability Placement project utilized geospatial technology to strategically locate vote centers for optimal voter accessibility. This innovative solution has improved voter turnout and inclusivity in the voting process.

CHALLENGE: LA County faced the challenge of modernizing its outdated voting system, which restricted voters to assigned polling places on a single day. Senate Bill 450 (SB450) necessitated a transformation to allow voters to cast ballots at any vote center. To address this, LA County embarked on a comprehensive analysis to identify ideal vote center locations. Unique factors included population density, demographics, voter behavior, language needs, and accessibility for diverse communities.

SOLUTION: LA County adopted a weighted overlay approach, integrating various layers such as population cluster, public transportation, geographically isolated areas, and low-income communities. Weighting factors allowed prioritization based on importance. The GIS team utilized the Delphi Method to determine weights through expert opinions. This approach revealed optimal vote center locations and ensured that staff and ballot machines were appropriately allocated.

INNOVATION: The GIS Empowers LA County Vote Center Placement stands as a groundbreaking initiative among California counties. Its innovative integration of diverse datasets and analytical techniques demonstrated creativity, uniqueness, and a pioneering spirit. The use of the Delphi Method for weighting exemplified a novel approach to solve complex spatial challenges.

RESULTS: The project yielded impressive results, positively impacting LA County's voting process. Voter accessibility significantly improved, with vote centers strategically placed based on demographic and transportation data. Voter satisfaction and turnout increased as individuals found convenient access to voting facilities. The project's success also strengthened community engagement, fostering a sense of inclusivity among diverse populations.

REPLICABILITY: The Vote Center GIS Suitability Placement project is highly replicable by other California counties. Its methodology and best practices can be shared and adapted to suit various jurisdictions. The Weighted Overlay approach, the use of Delphi Method for weighting, and the integration of diverse datasets can be promoted as valuable tools for comprehensive vote center placement strategies.

PROGRAM CONTACT: Fady Toma, GIS Manager; 12400 Imperial Highway, Norwalk, CA 90650; (562) 462-2358, FToma@rrcc.lacounty.gov

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS: Link to Presentation