

2020 Redistricting Preliminary Report

District Process Advisory Committee
September 16, 2020

Introduction

Every four years the City of Colorado Springs realigns the six City Council districts in response to changes in population and annexations to the municipal boundaries. This realignment process is called *redistricting*. The updated City Council districts are set in advance of the non-partisan municipal elections that will be held on April 6, 2021.

Per §5.1.302 of the City Code, the Colorado Springs City Council appoints a volunteer District Process Advisory Committee comprised of seven (7) representatives from each of the six (6) City Council districts and one (1) at-large. The Committee's role is to be the voice of citizens in the redistricting process. The Committee advises the City Clerk, engages in public outreach, and assists the Clerk with collecting and summarizing public input.

This preliminary report fulfills §5.1.304(C) for the Committee to “summarize the public input and make a preliminary recommendation of election district boundaries.” It should be noted that this preliminary report is separate from the report prepared by the City Clerk per §5.1.305.

Legal Requirements

The Committee's primary role is to ensure compliance with the legal requirements of the redistricting process.

- §5.1.303(A)
 - Contiguous districts
 - Substantially equal populations
 - Do not divide election precincts
- §5.1.303(B) – Comply with the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and to the extent possible:
 - Follow obvious geographic boundaries
 - Do not divide recognized neighborhoods
 - Do not divide identified communities of interest

Timeline Requirements

- The City Clerk will release a preliminary district report in early October 2020 and a public hearing will be held in October.
- The final district report, setting the district boundaries, will be released by the City Clerk by at least 120 days (December 2020) but no more than 150 days (November 2020) prior to the municipal elections.

Advisory Committee Process

The Advisory Committee process specified in §5.1.304(A) of the City Code includes:

- Engaging in outreach efforts, including, but not limited to “public meetings, e-town hall gatherings, electronic and print media, and City website posts”,
- Working with the City Clerk on schedules and dissemination of maps with population data,
- Conducting public meetings in each of the Council Districts,
- Reporting its findings to the City Council and the City Clerk.

The Committee formed in early July and continued meeting throughout the month of September.

Public Outreach

The Committee worked with the City Clerk and City staff to set up an informational web page on the City website at

<https://coloradosprings.gov/project/2020-city-council-redistricting>

The page was posted on 8/10/2020 and a page link was prominently displayed on the City website home page. The page included:

- An overview of the redistricting process,
- A set of four (4) map options for potential district boundaries, in both PDF and web-based interactive formats,
- Public meeting dates,
- A link to an online survey (see Appendix A for survey responses),
- A link to a document library of public outreach materials and presentations,
- Pro’s and con’s of each of the options,
- Information on how to Find your Council District,
- Information on how to contact the City Clerk and the Committee members,
- Information on how to submit feedback.

Seeking Input

We are currently seeking your input on this project. You can give us your input by clicking the link below.

[Give Input](#)

Contact

Department: [City Clerk](#), [City Council](#)

 City Clerk's Office
 (719) 385-5901
elections@coloradosprings.gov

Key Dates

April - June 2020 Advisory Committee Appointed

City Council appoints Advisory Committee. The Committee gathers citizen input and gives it to the City Clerk. The City Clerk sets the council district boundaries per City Charter.

June-August 2020 Citizen Input

This includes the following virtual public meetings. **Community members may attend any of the scheduled meetings**, not only the meeting hosted by a representative of their district.

- **Tuesday, August 18, 6:00 – 7:00 PM** City Council District 2– Carlos Perez
- **Wednesday, August 19, 2:00 – 3:00 PM** City Council District 3 – Mollie DeCost
- **Wednesday, August 19, 4:00 – 5:00 PM** City Council District 4 –

2020 City Council Redistricting

 Planning Phase

[Overview](#)

[Resource Center](#)

Every four years the City is required to re-align the six City Council districts to ensure they remain comparable in population as the city grows. This review must occur in the even-year prior to the odd-year election. The districts were last re-aligned in 2016 and it is now time to review the districts prior to the April 6, 2021 General Municipal Election.

The options

The 2016 district map is being updated to reflect four redistricting possibilities. The goals are to ensure the districts have roughly equal population, are contiguous, are representative of their respective populations, and comply with all applicable laws. There are four different options, with pros and cons for each. Select an option below to see the details. These maps are provided for discussion purposes only, the final maps will be drawn once this public comment period has ended.

- Option A
- Option B1
- Option C
- Option D

The District Process Advisory Committee and the City Clerk need your input

We need your feedback to the proposed changes to the district boundaries. By participating in the redistricting process, you are helping ensure that the City Council boundaries are fair and equitable.

You can provide feedback on the proposed changes to City Council district boundaries in several ways.

- [Online survey](#)

There were additional outreach efforts. This included postings on social media, emails, printed infographic flyers in public places (libraries, grocery stores, and the YMCA's) and coverage in The Gazette. See Appendix B through Appendix D for examples of these forms of outreach.

Public Meetings

The sudden worldwide pandemic of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) resulted in an extraordinary and significant public health emergency response in the spring of 2020. To comply with the state and local public health orders and avoid gathering in large groups to mitigate the spread of the virus, the Committee hosted online “virtual meetings” using video computer conferencing software provided by the City. Attendees could submit written comments in a live chat box. Attendees also had the option to participate telephonically by calling in to a conference line.

The meetings followed a similar agenda:

- 1) Welcome and Introductions
- 2) Districting Process and Timeline

- 3) Legal Requirements for Districting
- 4) Districting Data and Maps
- 5) Public Comment and Questions

Date and Time	District	Representative	Participants¹
Tue., Aug. 18, 6:00 – 7:00 PM	District 2	Carlos Perez	5
Wed., Aug. 19, 2:00 – 3:00 PM	District 3	Mollie DeCost	3
Wed., Aug. 19, 4:00 – 5:00 PM	District 6	Jessica Smith	2
Fri., Aug. 21, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	District 5	Jeff Mohrmann	8
Fri., Aug. 21, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	At-large	Maureen Christopher	2
Fri., Aug. 21, 3:00 – 4:00 PM	District 1	Hank Scarangella	3
Fri., Aug. 21, 5:30 – 6:30 PM	District 4	Jeannie Orozco	3
		TOTAL	26

Per-District Public Outreach Efforts

Members of the committee augmented the citywide public outreach effort with their own engagement efforts. The following table contains what individual members did to contact people and increase participation.

District	Outreach Efforts
1	The NextDoor platform was used to inform the public about the re-districting process, as well as a number of direct contacts with community and neighborhood leaders.
2	Emailed a notice to about 70 local elected leaders, neighbors, and civic-minded individuals who live in the district. Further emails went to a working committee of concerned neighbors meeting to discuss the future of the Briargate SIMD tax district. Also posted a notice on the Nextdoor social media site and submitted a letter to the Woodmen Edition which was published in their online edition. Discussed contacting homeowner associations with the Council of Neighbors and Organizations (CONO).

¹ Does not include City staff or Committee members

3	Spoke with multiple neighbors and friends living in my district, Posted about Public Meeting and survey in 2 separate posts on 'Nextdoor', 1 General on Facebook, posted in Facebook groups: Pikes Peak Progressives, Lady Dems of El Paso County. Also I took flyers (provided by the city) to the area that would be affected by changes in my District and knocked on 20 doors/left flyers. Spoke with the admin staff at the Hillside community Center and provided a flyer for their information board.
4	Sent out multiple network emails to include RISE Coalition, Community Development Corporation, and Transforming Safety. Posted on several community facebook pages (Southeast Colorado Springs Community/Real People of Southeast/RISE) to include invitations to online DPAC meetings. Outreach of 1500+ individuals.
5	Posted public meeting to personal and Little London Show Facebook page (1,000 plus reach, with most located in the downtown core). Solicited feedback from multiple citizens in District 5, including Councilwoman Jill Gaebler.
6	Posted public meetings on Next Door, Facebook and Instagram. Created an infographic/flyer and distributed to local libraries, CONO, Sertich, and the Olympic training center. Met with the President of CONO and current (termed) councilmen to review maps.

Preliminary Recommendations

The City Clerk provided the Committee with a set of four (4) districting map options. These were conversation starters and intended to prime the discussion for redrawing the boundaries. The overall goal was to rebalance the populations and accommodate for increases in the fastest growing areas of the city such as District 2 and District 6.

District	2016 Pop	2020 Pop ²	Option A	Option B1	Option C	Option D
1	72,701	76,670	78,198	75,585	78,965	75,968
2	73,209	86,315	77,699	80,312	81,924	80,312
3	73,931	78,142	80,788	80,788	80,788	80,788
4	73,958	76,785	82,199	82,199	77,672	84,374
5	73,467	77,895	83,029	84,044	79,188	83,661

² Population estimates based on data provided by Esri

6	72,440	86,007	79,901	78,886	83,277	76,711
TOTAL	439,706	481,814	481,814	481,814	481,814	481,814
IDEAL	73,284	80,303	80,302	80,302	80,302	80,302

Public Comments

1	The main comments received in District 3 as well as others were basically questions about the process. There were also multiple comments that seem to indicate quite a bit of confusion that the process divides school districts and that business proprietors may be affected yet have no say so.
2	One question raised in the District 2 meeting was how much demographic data comes into play in the decisions with map changes, and how much racial, business, communities of interest, income, and socioeconomic status data is included.
3	The primary recommendation (9 of 23 inputs) from the survey was about preserving neighborhood integrity. The next most common (4 of 23) recommendation was to keep similar neighborhoods together, which seemed to mean socio-economically similar neighborhoods. Three citizens clearly did not want “gerrymandering” or discrimination based on race or class. The common theme was “fairness”.
4	There were other survey inputs recommending aligning school and council districts (2), increasing the number of council districts (1), using major thoroughfares as boundaries (2), ensuring each district had equal populations (4) and to consider growth when drawing boundaries (1).
5	The virtual district meetings generated additional recommendations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unite Pleasant Valley - Unite Village Seven - Place Springs Ranch, Banning Lewis Ranch and Cottonwood Creek in CD6 - Unite Adams and Hillside
6	Comments from within District 5 focused primarily on how it would impact school districts in the District, as well as concern around dividing communities of interest. Councilwoman Gaebler indicated that she does not support the Option D map.
7	Some residents of District 2 wanted to ensure that all of the Briargate SIMD tax district remained all in the district. None of the map options divided it.

8	A researcher at UCCS informed us of an online redistricting tool developed through the GeoCivics program. See https://geocivics.uccs.edu/ and https://districtr.org/ .
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Election District Boundaries – Recommendations

1	If the opportunity presents itself, we recommend the City Clerk to prioritize the merger of the John Adams neighborhood (precinct 182) into the Hillside area (precinct 185) because of the intertwinement of the John Adams neighborhood (currently in Dist. 4) with District 3.
2	We recommend the Craigmoor neighborhood (Precincts 99 and 123) and the UCCS campus/Pulpit Rock (Precincts 120, 121, 124, 136, 138 and 140) remain in District 1 since both serve residents with common interests.
3	<p>The committee endorses the proposal to move precincts 650 (the airport economic zone and southern portion of the Banning Lewis Ranch) and 196 (Peterson Air Force Base) from District 6 to District 4.</p> <p>This will unite all of Harrison School District 2 and move Widefield School District 3 into Council District 4. One commenter noted that a local newspaper (The Southeast Express) encompasses the 80910 and 80916 ZIP codes and South Powers Blvd does not feel like a real boundary any longer. There is little risk that the projected growth in the next 4 years will dilute the existing communities of interest in District 4 and having both the north and south area of BLR represented on the City Council may be beneficial as this area is built out.</p>
4	If the opportunity presents itself, we recommend that the Village Seven neighborhood (precincts 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 166, and 167) remain together in District 5.

Other Recommendations

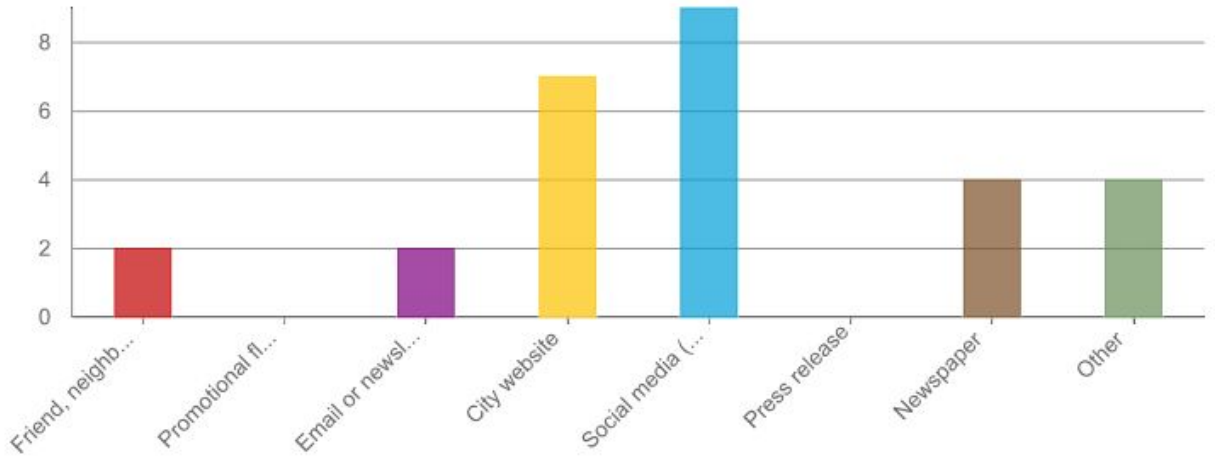
1	(Committee member recommendation) I would recommend in the Future that City Council members make an effort to attend these public meetings, in all 7 meetings only 1 council member was present. I would also recommend that part of the criteria for information gathering next round require that the committee members reach out to neighborhood associations and report back concerns to the City Clerk. It became obvious at
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	<p>some point that the Clerk cannot possibly know all the intricacies of established neighborhoods which was not ever communicated or known until the ending of the process.</p> <p>In summary of all of my gathered information people really do not understand that this is completely non-partisan and that it doesn't affect things like schools. This should really be brought to the attention of the city clerk/ and or council mainly due to the fact that the survey asks questions that allude to that, specifically when asking "what are the most important things to you when drawing a city council map" , the options include "school districts" and "No gerrymandering" , I do understand the concept that the councilmen could potentially have an impact on certain aspects of the school district but the question is poorly worded so it's no wonder people have these misconceptions.</p> <p>Secondarily, the City Clerk acknowledged that demographic data such Race, income, socioeconomics etc. play some part in that redistricting process, and we as a committee have not been made aware of those intricacies or that information. I would encourage the Clerk in the future to provide that data and possibly the reasoning behind it to the next committee because if racial demographics, income and socioeconomic status are indeed factors then to preserve the integrity of the process, the process in making those decisions should be public or at very least available to committee members.</p>
2	<p>City staff suggested that the City Code should be scrubbed and streamlined to align with the staff's best practices for redistricting.</p>
3	<p>One person who has previously run for city council recommended that the redistricting process timelines be moved up. Organizing and running a campaign is very challenging and currently with the districts having 80K residents there is not much time between when the new maps are released in November to when the municipal elections are held in April. Candidates need to know much earlier which district they live in.</p>

Appendix A: Online Survey Results

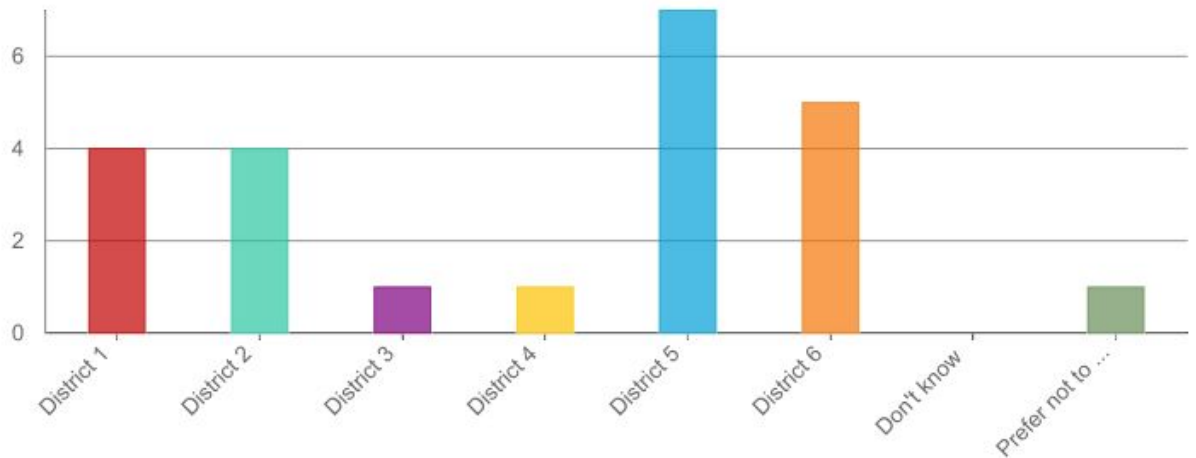
An online survey was developed to solicit feedback from the public. As of 9/15/2020, the survey questions and responses are below:

1. How did you learn about the City Council 2020 redistricting process?



(Answered: 25, Skipped: 0)

2. Which city council district do you currently reside in?



(Answered: 23, Skipped: 2)

3. What is your current ZIP code?



(Answered: 24, Skipped 1)

4. What is the most important consideration when drawing city council districts boundaries?



5. How do you suggest these district lines change to achieve equal population among the six council districts?

We received 20 comments through the survey. These are summarized in the Public Comments section incorporated in this report.

1. We are personally affected by overcrowding in Vista Ridge and are concerned about our children’s education being compromised. Option C, as proposed, seems appropriate. Truly, anything north of Woodman and West of Marksheffel should be considered for CD2 boundaries. We are Forrest Meadows, near Vollmer & Cowpoke.

Unable to tell from map if our neighborhood would be included in the new zoning if Option C, if chosen.

Above, you mention population growth in CD2 and 6 and then mention CD1234 need to be increased in population. Is CD2 needing to be increased or decreased?

2. Under "Pro and Cons, District 1, Bullit point 4, typo error 242 and 242

3. The target average for each jurisdiction is 80,302. The difference between highest to lowest matters significantly. Allowing district equity for current population. Option Option A is close but there isn't equity between District 5 and District 1. Adding the following to the proposal in Option A is optimal. Option A could move D4 precinct 194 (2806) to D6. In District 5, a reduction moving precinct 128 (2332) to District 1 would balance both Districts. To further balance District 6, precinct 140 (1571) could move to District 2. The population numbers may be off slightly as the map was incredibly difficult to read online. The resulting balances for each District would be more closely aligned in this way: District 1 - 80,530; District 2 - 79,270; District 3 - 80,788; District 4 - 79,393; District 5 - 80,697; and District 6 - 81,136. The overall difference from highest to lowest District would be 1866. Significantly less than the lowest option proposed (A) of 5330.

4. Survey says district 2 needs to decrease population and increase population. Which is it?

5. Shift precincts from Districts 2 and 6 to Districts 1,3,4 and 5. I think A does the best job with the fewest drawbacks.

6. Redistrict to make all districts comparable in population size REGARDLESS of voters' political affiliation on their voter registrations. Or, redistrict to have low AND high income in the SAME district to prevent gerrymandering by income and political affiliation. ANYTHING to make things equal and fair.

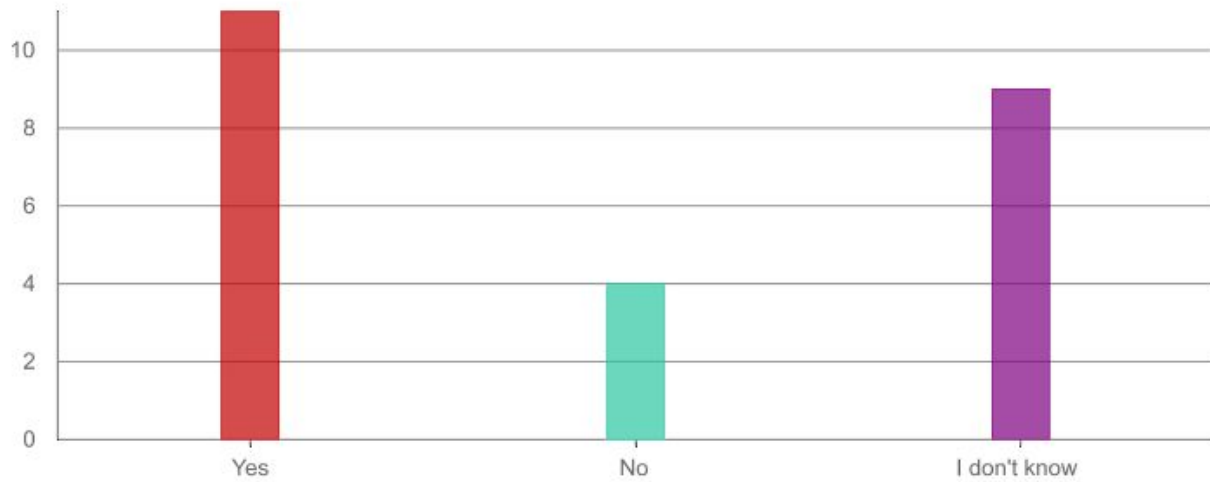
7. Rather than shrinking the Districts that are going we should increase the number of districts so that neighborhoods don't get split.

8. Please consider that less wealthy neighborhoods may need a bigger voice of representation. Wealthier neighborhoods (West side) shouldn't have fewer people in their district. Of the 4 options, Option C is my preference.

9. Option D looks best to me. It allows those of us who live north of Dublin Blvd. to be in the same council district as our neighbors south of Dublin. It also extends our district east to Union Blvd where neighborhoods are similar to ours, but does not go farther east where dwellings are much younger.

10. Option C is preferred
11. Most of my Springs Ranch neighborhood is in District 6, but my part of the neighborhood is in District 5. I know 6 is supposed to decrease, but I hope my neighborhood will be included with 6 in the next redistricting.
12. Just keep the boundaries somewhat regular (no crazy gerrymandering boundaries) and keep economically similar neighborhoods in the same district.
13. I think options a, b, & d are fine. I'd like to see precinct 454 remain where it is currently in district 6.
14. District 5, pros, bullet point 6: If I am reading the map correctly, this change is not reflected on the map
15. District 4 is virtually synonymous with "Southeast COS," so we would like to see District 4 pick up new precincts to its south and east. We have our own monthly newspaper, The Southeast Express, mailed to all residents in zip codes 80910 and 80916. Once upon a time, South Powers Boulevard felt like a real boundary, but new developments in the area -- including the Milton Proby Parkway -- are blurring the divide. We also have shared municipal concerns, such as CSPD's Sand Creek Division (with its new headquarters!), the importance of smart in-fill development, and trails and parks along Sand and Spring Creeks.
16. Consider anticipated housing developments as well as current population.
17. Moving precincts 445 into CD2 unites more of School District 20 precincts into CD2
18. Move a section of District 6 into District 4, add part of 5 into district 4 and 3.
19. As compact and contiguous as practicable, while utilizing man-made or natural boundaries, factoring in communities of interest, and including respect for past voter selections
20. Option C allows growth for District 2 and aligns to District 20

6. After reviewing the four redistricting map changes on this site, do you believe the proposals adequately represent equal population among districts, communities of interest and preserve the voice of neighborhoods?



(Answered: 24, Skipped: 1)

7. Any other comments you wish to make on the city council districts?

We received 15 comments through the survey. These are summarized in the Public Comments section incorporated in this report.

Appendix B: Newspaper Coverage

LOCAL&STATE

GAZETTE.COM/NEWS

A SECTION

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 2020

Council floats changes to district maps

BY MARY SHINN
mary.shinn@gazette.com

The districts represented by six Colorado Springs City Council members will shift this year to account for population growth in north and northeast portions of the city.

District 2, the northernmost district, and District 6, the northeast and eastern district, will each shrink and the other four will have to gain population to keep the six districts balanced, City Clerk Sarah Johnson said.

Colorado Springs has nine City Council members, six representing districts and three elected at-large.

“Everybody is going to have some minor changes to their district,” she said.

The city’s goal during

SEE MAPS • PAGE 4

MAPS

FROM PAGE 3

redistricting is to keep neighborhoods with similar characteristics together so that they can be represented by the same council member who advocates for them, said Jacob Anderson, a spokesman for the city. The redistricting is happening ahead of a City Council election in April where six of the nine seats could be contested.

The City Clerk’s Office has prepared four maps with draft changes to the districts for public review. The city might mix and match proposed changes from the four options in the final map that will be finished this fall.

Geographically one of the biggest changes could be splitting Banning Lewis Ranch between District 4 and District 6. Previously, all of Banning Lewis Ranch was in District 6.

The large subdivision hasn’t been built out and so it would affect relatively few people, but there are some residents in District 6 that live directly adjacent to District 4 and it might make sense to keep those neighbors together, Johnson said.

Districts are redrawn every four years to balance population and, as Banning Lewis Ranch grows, the map would be regularly adjusted, she said.

The changes also propose uniting and splitting some homeowners associations and neighborhoods. For example, one map change would split up the Woodmen Heights and Dublin North neighborhood.

The city plans to present the proposed changes in virtual town halls next week starting Tuesday. The same information will be presented in each meeting. The proposed map changes, a survey, meeting schedule and link to web streams can be found at coloradosprings.gov/redistricting.

MEETINGS ON CITY COUNCIL REDISTRICTING

Online town halls on city of Colorado Springs redistricting will be held at the following times at coloradosprings.gov/redistricting. Each event is an hour long:

- 6 p.m. Tuesday
- 2 p.m. Wednesday
- 4 p.m. Wednesday
- 11 a.m. Friday
- 1 p.m. Friday
- 3 p.m. Friday
- 5:30 p.m. Friday

Woodmen Edition (online only), September 2, 2020

https://gazette.com/woodmenedition/letters-to-the-editor-sept-2-2020/article_f05cc3ec-e7c4-11ea-a113-3bfe0687df82.html



City Council redistricting process public meetings

Every four years the City of Colorado Springs re-aligns the six City Council districts in response to changes in population. The updated City Council districts are set in advance of the non-partisan municipal elections that will be held on April 6, 2021.

Our City Council members deliberate and vote on difficult and sometimes contentious legislation such as police accountability, parks land acquisitions, Colorado Springs Utilities renewable energy policy, accessory dwelling units, homelessness, and affordable housing development. The City Council in collaboration with the mayor creates the city budget. The City Council approves and oversees public-private special districts and enterprise zones that help attract and retain businesses.

Your voice in how the city government is run and the kind of leadership you want is important. This begins with ensuring that there is fair and equitable representation on the City Council. You are invited to comment on the proposed changes to the City Council district boundaries via the council-appointed volunteer advisory committee. Visit the city website at coloradosprings.gov/redistricting or send an email to elections@coloradosprings.gov for more information on participating in this important electoral process.

Carlos Perez, Districting Process Advisory Committee Member

Colorado Springs

Appendix C: Social Media

The image is a screenshot of a Nextdoor post. On the left is a navigation sidebar with categories like Home, Charleston Place, Map, Digest, Neighborhood, Help Map, Businesses, For Sale & Free, Local Deals (marked 'New'), Events, Real Estate, Safety, Lost & Found, General, Groups, All Groups, Colorado Springs Votes, Topics, All Topics, and Directories. The main content area shows a post from the 'City of Colorado Springs' group, dated August 12. The post features an aerial photograph of a residential street with houses and trees. Below the photo is a text announcement about a public meeting for District 2 redistricting, explaining that the city must review district boundaries every four years. It includes a link to learn more about the process and another link to find the user's city council district.

Sample Facebook event posting:



AUG
18

City Council redistricting public meeting for District 2

Public · Hosted by **City of Colorado Springs Government**

✓ Going ▾ ⋮

Your response is visible to the hosts and 👥 Friends ▾

🕒 Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 6 PM – 7 PM
about 2 weeks ago

📍 Virtual Event

About Discussion

Appendix D: Announcement Flyer

COLORADO SPRINGS
REDISTRICTING 2020

Population **481,814** Mayor **John Suthers**
Area **210 sq. mi** City Clerk **Sarah Johnson**

City Council

District 1 Don Knight **District 4** Yolanda Avila
District 2 David Geislinger **District 5** Jill Gaebler
District 3 Richard Skorman **District 6** Andy Pico

At Large Bill Murray, Tom Strand, and Wayne Williams

This is going to change!

This is why!

The City Council Districts must be re-aligned based on population every four years. Code 5.1.3
Contiguous districts
Substantially equal populations
Do not divide Election precincts

City Charter 2-10(b)
Comply with the Voting Rights Act
The extent possible follow obvious geographic boundaries, do not divide recognized neighborhoods, do not divide identified communities of interests.

Thoughts? Questions? Concerns? **Contact your redistricting representative!**



District 1 – Hank Scarangella
District 2 – Carlos Perez
District 3 – Mollie Decost
District 4 – Jeannie Orozco
District 5 – Jeff Mohrmann
District 6 – Jessica Smith
At-Large – Maureen Christopher

EMAIL BELOW
elections@coloradosprings.gov

For more information go to
<https://coloradosprings.gov/city-clerk/page/2020-city-council-redistricting?mld=48896>