

# 2020 Redistricting Final Report

District Process Advisory Committee

November 18, 2020

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## Introduction

The District Process Advisory Committee continued to support and advise the City Clerk after the preliminary City Council District redistricting plan was released to the public on October 1, 2020. This final report summarizes the committee's work and builds upon the recommendations of the 2020 Redistricting Preliminary Report dated September 16, 2020.

This final report to City Council fulfills §5.1.308 of the City Code which states "at the conclusion of the districting process, the Advisory Committee shall prepare a final Advisory Committee report after the City Clerk's final district report." It should be noted that this final report is separate from the report prepared by the City Clerk per §5.1.307.

This final report includes, per City Code verbatim:

- A. A summary of the Advisory Committee's public education efforts;
- B. The dates, times, locations, attendance, and results of one or more public meetings;
- C. A copy of the preliminary Advisory Committee report described in subsection 5.1.304C of this part;
- D. A summary of any protests and the date, time, location, attendance and results of the public hearing on any protests;
- E. An evaluation of the process and compliance with the requirements of the City Charter and this part.

## 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 released a preliminary district report on October 1, 2020 and a public hearing was held on October 21, 2020.
- 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 months of September, October and November.

## Public Education Efforts

A substantial portion of the committee’s outreach and engagement efforts occurred prior to the City Clerk’s publication of the preliminary district boundary map. This effort is documented in the committee’s preliminary report.

After publication of the preliminary map, the committee engaged in additional outreach efforts by sending emails and promoting awareness on social media such as conducting an interview with the City Clerk on the Little London Show podcast. This augmented the City’s outreach which included hosting a redistricting-specific webpage (with an online survey) and posting notifications on the Nextdoor and Facebook social media sites (see Appendix B for examples).

## 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

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Representative</b>	<b>Participants<sup>1</sup></b>
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
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>

A summary of the meeting comments and recommendations can be found in the committee’s preliminary report.

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<sup>1</sup> Does not include City staff or Committee members

## Advisory Committee's Preliminary Report

A copy of the preliminary Advisory Committee report is available on the City website at:

[https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/2020\\_redistricting\\_preliminary\\_report\\_-\\_final\\_20200916.pdf](https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/2020_redistricting_preliminary_report_-_final_20200916.pdf)

The committee preliminary report was formally submitted and presented to the City Council at their regular work session on September 21, 2020. The meeting was streamed online and citizens had the option to call in and listen to the proceedings. A recording of the work session is publicly available on the City website.

## Protest Meeting

The City Clerk held a formal Protest Hearing on October 21, 2020 from 2:00 to 3:00 PM. Citizens had the option to attend “virtually” or in person at the City Administration Building.

Fifteen (15) people participated including six (6) people from the public. The City Clerk, an At-Large Council Member, members of the advisory committee, and several members of City staff were in attendance. Except for the City Clerk and one other staff member, everyone participated by video conference or telephonically.

There were no objections raised by the public to the proposed preliminary map.

A representative from the Council of Neighbors and Organizations (CONO) suggested that voting precinct 605, which is in the area of the Stratton Meadows neighborhood and in Harrison school district 2, be moved into Council District 4 because it is similar in demographics to the aforementioned district. During the discussion it was noted that precinct 605 is not contiguous with Council District 4 and therefore it would be impossible to join this precinct with Council District 4. There was a suggestion that the El Paso County Clerk and Recorder should take a closer look at the Stratton Meadows neighborhood and reconsider the encompassing precinct boundaries in the future to ensure that they best represent the area.

## Evaluation of the Process

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the work of the committee and City staff. It was a challenge to work within the public health order restrictions. We were not able to easily meet in person and the per district meetings were moved to “virtual” meetings. Overall the social media, website, and online survey tools were successful with communicating and collecting feedback from the community. Even though electronic meetings will never be a substitute for in-person meetings, social media and online conferencing tools undoubtedly extended the reach and effectiveness of citizen engagement.

*The committee recommends that innovative platforms that connect people with their government continue to be an integral part of civic participation.*

The committee felt we started out slow and there was some confusion and misunderstandings as to the job requirements and expected outcomes. Several members felt we were somewhat disorganized at the beginning but later on in the process we became more comfortable in our roles as representatives of the council districts. It was not clear as to the role of the At-Large representative however. It would have been useful if there was a former committee from the last redistricting effort to help mentor the committee and pass on lessons learned. We also found that it was difficult to schedule meeting dates and times. It would have been beneficial to have standing meetings scheduled in advance rather than schedule meetings on an ad-hoc basis. Because not all committee members could attend some of the meetings, we may have missed valuable insight on district-specific concerns and comments. We also found that the open meetings law that prevents communicating via email distribution lists or “reply all” to be an obstacle to collaboration.

*The committee recommends that City staff provide more information on roles and responsibilities of the committee members, timelines and deadlines, and provide more flexibility on scheduling meetings outside of regular business hours. The committee and staff should focus on the fundamentals of onboarding committee members and electing a chairperson early on to facilitate the meetings so that the members are working together efficiently and as quickly as possible.*

Redistricting is a complex process requiring analytical thinking skills and careful study of the subject matter. It is a topic that requires thorough understanding and background context to explain to the public. The outreach effort would benefit from a more focused and coordinated communications strategy. Not everyone is an expert on the needs of the city as a whole, for example, the District 1 representative may understand their district (northwest district) but not understand the unique needs of District 4 (southeast district), and vice versa. To ensure compliance with voting rights

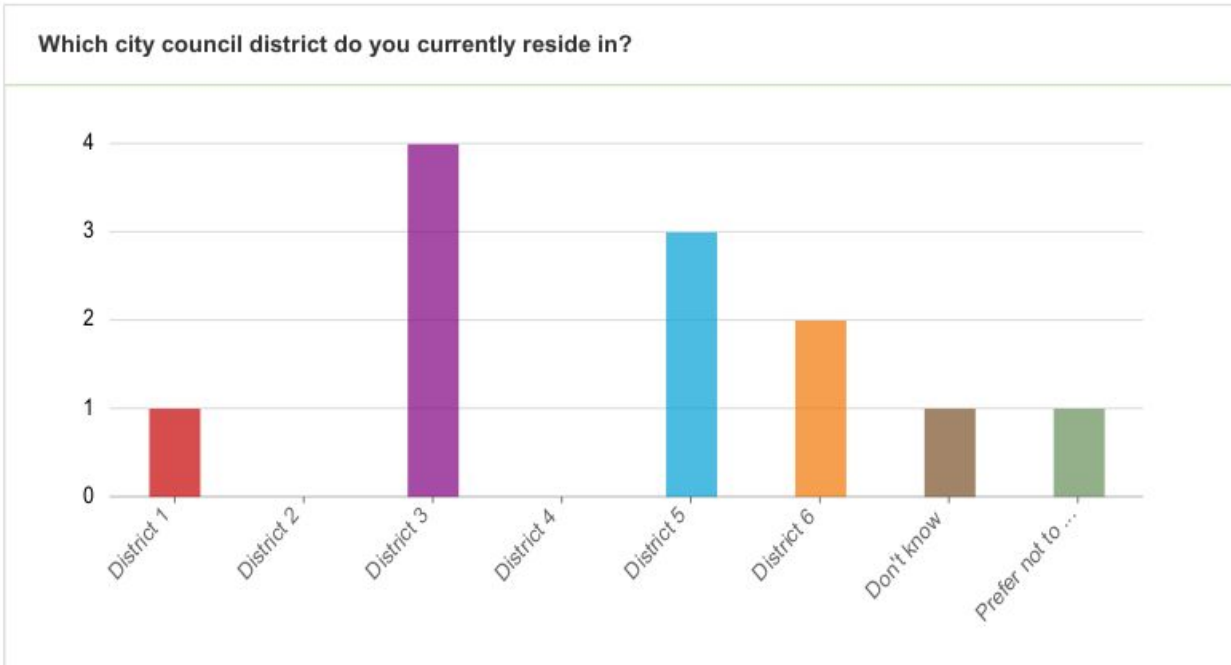
laws and maintaining communities of interest, there should have been more guidance from City staff. We also found the PDF maps unwieldy and cumbersome to use versus the ArcGIS interactive maps that showed various map layers of precinct boundaries, neighborhoods, and school districts. The City Clerk mailed large format paper maps to several of the committee members and this was helpful.

*The committee recommends that City staff ensure that more time is allotted to preparation and internal discussion on the details of the redistricting process, that background material such as interactive online maps are provided in advance, clarifying what is needed to provide sound advice to the City Clerk, and better coordinate on a comprehensive public outreach and engagement communications strategy.*

# Appendix A: Online Survey Results

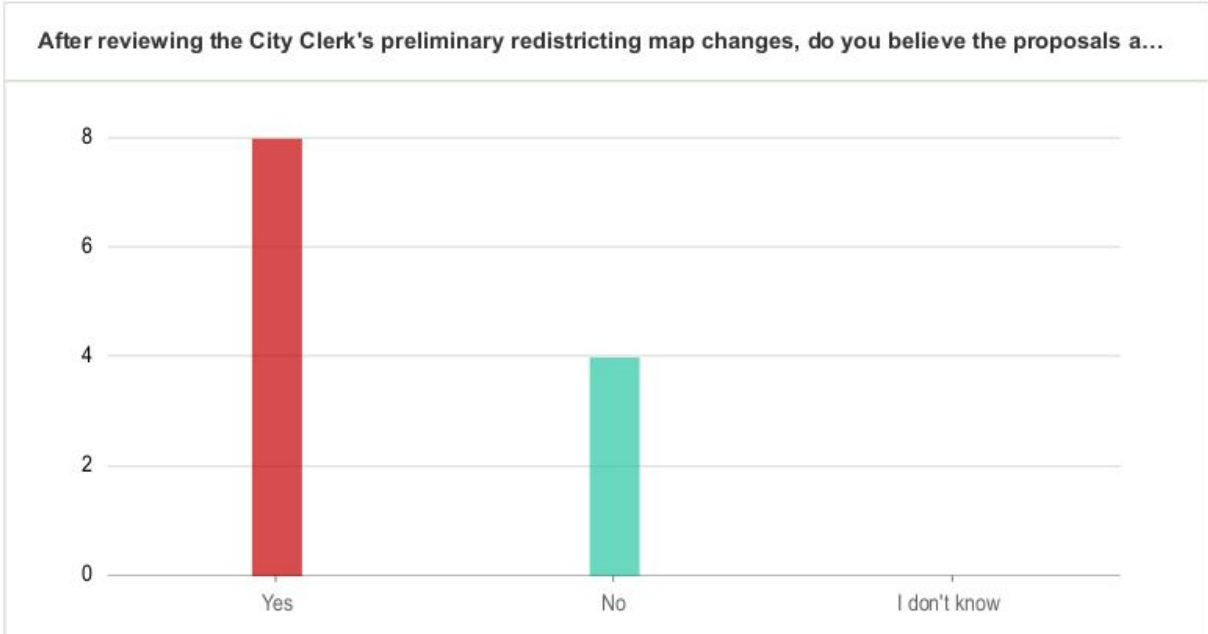
A second follow-up online survey was posted on the City website to solicit feedback from the public. As of 11/2/2020, the survey questions and responses are shown below:

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



(Answered: 12, Skipped: 0)

2. After reviewing the City Clerk's preliminary redistricting map changes, do you believe the proposals adequately represent equal population among districts, communities of interest and preserves the voice of neighborhoods?



(Answered: 12, Skipped: 0)

3. After reviewing the City Clerk's preliminary redistricting plan, how would you change the proposed new districts to achieve balanced populations across all districts?

- 1) North of Woodmen is D20. South of woodmen d49 until they hit the next district
- 2) I think moving 601 into district 3 is long over due.
- 3) The clearly unmarked, undesignated white areas need to moved into districts. Not sure why nor how they're being excluded. I understand the goal is to maintain some balance of population between districts, but with the growth and expansion of the area that's not always going to be possible--but they folks living in a unknown zone need to be moved into a district.
- 4) To better encompass the actual neighborhoods of the city. I live downtown but it is not wholly represented by one person but seems rather piecemeal.
- 5) Yes, Now fix the fire tax districts so some of us in Cumbre Vista and Black Forest are not knowingly paying two fire taxes. City Council members don't seem to care enough about this issue.
- 6) *(Committee's note: this comment seems to refer to Harrison School District 2 and instead should refer to City Council District 4.)* I am concerned about the changes to district two. District two currently encompasses the most cohesive and vibrant communities of color as well as low income communities and other historically marginalized groups. The proposed changes dilute representation of those



communities by adding a significant portion of Banning Lewis ranch and the COS Airport. Banning Lewis has not been developed, but it is reasonable to anticipate development will likely bring new residents to the area with different needs, perspectives and identities from current residents...that will effectively gentrify the district. It is essential that marginalized communities have representation on City Council. A stronger District 2 would include precincts 185, 168, 180, 901 and other areas around the Citadel and the Hillside neighborhood instead of the airport and Banning Lewis.

7) These changes seem reasonable for the areas with which I am familiar. More weight should be given to the people who live in precincts that have changed to different council districts.

8) Forest Meadows should be included in district 2. There is overcrowding in Vista Ridge High School.

9) The new map puts Precinct 412 and everything east of Powers into City District 6, which makes a lot more sense than before, when it was drawn out of place in District 5. The new proposal looks more fair than before, and I think it should be approved.

(Answered: 9, Skipped 3)

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

1) 100 percent on board with this.

2) This seems to have little obvious gerrymandering. My biggest concern is city council being responsive to citizens within their district, no matter what district they are in. The communication between citizens and elected needs better a process and transparency

3) Andy Pico knows this and is not doing anything for those of us in Cumbre Vista. Shame on him. Re-zone the fire tax zones too.

4) How competitive are the districts based on information about partisan voters? Are there any issues to address regarding the Voting Rights Act - are minorities able to elect candidates of their choice? More information about socio-economic information would be needed to address issues of gerrymandering.

5) Thanks to Sarah Johnson and staff for their hard work.

(Answered: 5, Skipped 7)

# Appendix B – Social Media Outreach

City website (retrieved 11/16/2020):

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [coloradosprings.gov/project/2020-city-council-redistricting](https://coloradosprings.gov/project/2020-city-council-redistricting). The page is titled "2020 City Council Redistricting" and is currently in the "Planning Phase".

**Contact**  
Department: City Clerk, City Council  
City Clerk's Office  
(719) 385-5901  
[elections@coloradosprings.gov](mailto: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 6 – Jessica Smith
  - Friday, August 21, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM** City Council District 5 – Jeff Mohrmann
  - Friday, August 21, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM** City Council At-large – Maureen Christopher
  - Friday, August 21, 3:00 – 4:00 PM** City Council District 1 – Hank Scarangella
  - Friday, August 21, 5:30 – 6:30 PM** City Council District 4 – Jeannie Orozco
- August - September 2020 Citizen Input Report**  
Committee reports back to City Council with results from citizen input process
- October 2020 Preliminary District Map Released**

**2020 City Council Redistricting**  
Planning Phase

**Overview**  
The City Clerk sets the Council District boundaries every four years (per City Charter) to ensure districts remain comparable in population as the city grows. The districts were last re-aligned in 2016 and the City Clerk is now reviewing the districts ahead of the April 6, 2021 General Municipal Election.

**Map and Redistricting Report**  
In accordance with the City Charter and City Code, Colorado Springs City Clerk Sarah Johnson released the final City Council Redistricting Plan for the six City Council Districts on November 10, 2020.  
[View Final Map](#) | [View the full report](#)  
[Preliminary Plan City Council Districts Written Descriptions](#)

**Resource Center**  
The six City Council Districts must be re-aligned based on population every four years according to City Code [5.1.3-Election Districts](#) and [City Charter 2-10\(b\)](#). 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 for a four-year term of all six City Council District seats.  
[Find your Council District](#) | [Find your Council member](#)

**Document Library**  
These documents were provided during the District Process Advisory Committee's public comment phase.

- [Redistricting flyer](#)
- [Presentation to City Council \(work session 6/4/2020\)](#)
- [Statistical Terminology for Redistricting](#)
- [Pros and cons option A | Option A map](#)
- [Pros and cons option B1 | Option B1 map](#)
- [Pros and cons option C | Option C map](#)
- [Pros and cons option D | Option D map](#)
- [District Process Advisory Committee 2020 Redistricting Preliminary Report](#)

**Committee**  
**Districting Process Advisory Committee (DPAC)**  
The City Council has appointed an advisory committee to aid the City Clerk in gathering citizen input for re-aligning the

Facebook post (retrieved 11/16/2020):



The Little London Show is in Colorado Springs, Colorado. October 3 · 🌐

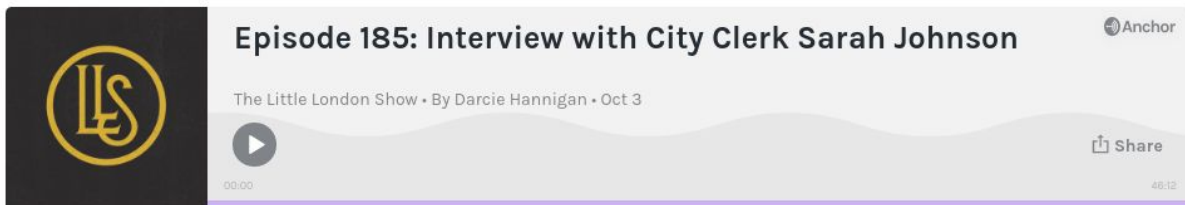
City Clerk Sarah Johnson and her team are responsible for everything from business licensing to drawing city council district maps. We talked with her about election security, how to get a measure on the city ballot, running for city council and so much more. Check this episode out on your favorite #podcast platform and get ready for the infamous WTF IS ON THE BALLOT?! series, coming up next!


#WeareCOS #coloradosprings #cosprings #elections2020 #voting #localelections #vote... See More





**EPISODE 185:  
INTERVIEW WITH  
CITY CLERK  
SARAH JOHNSON  
MAIL-IN BALLOTS, RUNNING  
FOR CITY COUNCIL,  
REDISTRICTING & MORE**

Little London Show podcast:




 Episode 185: Interview with City Clerk Sarah Johnson Anchor

The Little London Show • By Darcie Hannigan • Oct 3

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<https://www.thelittlelondonshow.com/episodes/episode-185-interview-with-city-clerk-sarah-johnson>

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This post is from a **Local Agency**

**City of Colorado Springs**  
City of Colorado Springs Web Team • 1 Oct



**City Clerk Sarah Johnson Releases Preliminary City Council Redistricting Plan.** In accordance with the City Charter and City Code, Colorado Springs City Clerk Sarah Johnson released a preliminary City Council Redistricting Plan for the six City Council Districts.

The City Clerk sets the Council District boundaries every four years (per City Charter) to ensure districts remain comparable in population as the city grows. The districts were last re-aligned in 2016 and the City Clerk is now reviewing the districts ahead of the April 6, 2021 General Municipal Election.

“City Council members represent the members of their District, so it’s important to make sure each Council member represents approximately the same number of residents,” said Sarah Johnson, City Clerk. “Redistricting is an essential adjustment to make sure we all have fair representation in making the rules for our city.”

Nextdoor post (retrieved 11/16/2020):

The screenshot shows a Nextdoor mobile interface. On the left is a navigation menu with categories like Home, Charleston Place, Map, Digest, Neighborhood, Help Map, Businesses, For Sale & Free, Local Deals, Events (highlighted), Real Estate, Safety, Lost & Found, Documents, General, Groups, All Groups, Springs Walk n' Talk, Topics, and All Topics. The main content area features a search bar, a date badge for 'OCT 21', and a photo of a park path. The event title is 'City Council Redistricting Protest Hearing' on 'Wed, Oct 21, 2:00 PM'. Below the title are buttons for 'Going', 'Share', and a menu icon, with a status of '2 Going · 1 Maybe'. The 'Event details' section contains text about the City Clerk's redistricting plan and a public hearing on October 21, 2020, at 2 p.m. It lists participation options: 'In Person' at the City Administration Building and 'Virtually' via a link to the city council page. On the right, a sidebar provides location details (City Administration Building, 30 South Nevada Ave, Suite 102, Colorado Springs, CO 80903), the date and time, and identifies the post as being from the 'City of Colorado Springs Web Team'.

Facebook post (retrieved 11/16/2020):



**City of Colorado Springs Government** ✓  
October 1 · 🌐


In accordance with the City Charter and City Code, Colorado Springs City Clerk Sarah Johnson released a preliminary City Council Redistricting Plan for the six City Council Districts.

The City Clerk sets the Council District boundaries every four years (per City Charter) to ensure districts remain comparable in population as the city grows. The districts were last re-aligned in 2016 and the City Clerk is now reviewing the districts ahead of the April 6, 2021 General Municipal Election.

"City Council members represent the members of their District, so it's important to make sure each Council member represents approximately the same number of residents," said Sarah Johnson, City Clerk. "Redistricting is an essential adjustment to make sure we all have fair representation in making the rules for our city."

City Council appointed a volunteer District Process Advisory Committee in April 2020. The Committee has been gathering citizen input via public meetings and surveys, and providing this feedback to the City Clerk.

More information about the plan, the process, how do give your feedback and the volunteer Districting Process Advisory Committee is available at: [coloradosprings.gov/redistricting](https://coloradosprings.gov/redistricting)

 **COLORADOSPRINGS.GOV**  
**2020 City Council Redistricting**  
The community is invited to a series of digital public meetings to discuss City Council redistricting. Every four years the City is requir...

👍👤 You, Sarah B Johnson and 8 others

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# Appendix C: References

City of Colorado Springs City Code, Chapter 5, Article 1, Part 3, Election Districts,  
[https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/coloradospringsco/latest/coloradosprings\\_co/0-0-0-6318](https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/coloradospringsco/latest/coloradosprings_co/0-0-0-6318)

Districting Process Advisory Committee, 2020 Redistricting Preliminary Report  
(September 16, 2020)

City Clerk, City Clerk Preliminary Map - Final 2020 (October 1, 2020)

City Clerk, 2020 City Clerk Preliminary City Council District Plan (October 1, 2020)

City Clerk, 2020 City Clerk Final City Council District Report (November 10, 2020)