



2022-2023 Redistricting Plan

City of Commerce City, Colorado



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Introduction

This document shall inform the city clerk's office staff, city councilmembers, city staff, and the public on how the city clerk shall conduct the 2022-2023 redistricting process. The information contained within this document is subject to change at any time due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the health and safety of staff and the public.

For questions on the City's redistricting process:

Dylan Gibson, City Clerk

dgibson@c3gov.com

303-227-8791

For questions on voter registration, mail ballots, voter services, polling locations, etc:

Adams County Clerk and Recorder

www.Adamsvotes.com

adams.elections@adcogov.org

720-523-6500

For questions on the state's redistricting plan, maps, and boundaries:

Colorado Independent Redistricting Commissions

<https://redistricting.colorado.gov>

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Purpose of Redistricting

Every 10 years, Congress conducts the census, which is the act of counting every person living in the United States for the purpose of determining representation in Congress (US Constitution Article I, Section 2). Once the federal government has conducted the census, states use the data collected to add or remove U.S. Congressional districts and redraw their district boundaries to satisfy certain constitutional doctrines such as equal populations among districts and racial equality as to not dilute the voting power between districts or of minority groups.

Once states have reapportioned and/or redrawn their U.S. Congressional districts then states, counties, and local governments will then redraw their respective districts or wards to meet the same constitutional doctrines, state statutes, and/or municipal charter requirements.

It is generally recommended that municipalities, other local governments, and special districts wait until all other governmental entities above them have redrawn their districts before they begin redrawing theirs. The State of Colorado is anticipated to conclude its independent redistricting process in December 2021 and Adams County must finish redrawing election precincts by March 1, 2022 (Secretary of State Rule 2.20). County election precincts cannot split state districts and, to the best of its ability, municipalities should avoid splitting election precincts among its wards.

As such, Commerce City will begin its redistricting process in early 2022. Per the Commerce City Charter, new ward boundaries must be approved by city council no later than 180 days before the regular municipal election (Charter Sec. 4.2). The last day city council may approve new ward boundaries is Thursday, May 11, 2023.

Authority, Powers, and Responsibilities

The United States Constitution grants Congress the authority to conduct the census (U.S. Constitution Article I, Section 2). The census was conducted under the U.S. Secretary of State's office until 1849 when Congress established the census board and it was moved under the Department of the Interior. In 1902 Congress officially created the Census Office within the Department of the Interior and in 1903 moved into the Department of Commerce where it has remained since. The Census Bureau is authorized to conduct the census on behalf of Congress and is responsible for providing the census data to the public.

The Colorado Independent Congressional and Legislative Redistricting Commissions were created upon passage of Amendments Y and Z in the 2018 election by Colorado voters. The independent commissions are responsible for redistricting the U.S. Congressional and Colorado state house and senate districts, respectively. The independent commissions must have their maps approved by the Colorado Supreme Court by December 15, 2021.

Colorado Revised State Statutes state that general election precincts are established by each county clerk (C.R.S. 1-5-101(1)). General election precinct boundaries cannot split state representative, senate, or congressional districts.

The Commerce City Charter requires that changes in ward boundaries be made by an adoption of an ordinance by city council and that the change is made at least 180 days prior to a regular municipal election.



Historically, the city clerk's office has managed the redistricting process. The redistricting process for 2022-2023 will include input and involvement from the city council, Commerce City residents, organizations, and business, the city clerk's office, city manager's office, city attorney's office, GIS division, planning & zoning division, economic development, and more.

Redistricting Requirements

There are a number of requirements and considerations when governmental entities redraw their district or ward boundaries. In addition to those mentioned earlier, equal populations and racial equality, other requirements and considerations exist such as the compactness of a district, contiguity, preservation of boundaries (less applicable to municipalities and local governments), and preservation of communities of interest.

Equal Populations

The first requirement of redistricting is that district and ward boundaries have as equal population as possible to ensure that one person's vote in one district is worth as much as another's vote in a different district. The general standard for deviation between the smallest and largest ward is no more than 10% deviation between the two, but municipalities should strive to be draw their wards with as equal population as possible.

Racial Equality

The second requirement of redistricting is that district and ward boundaries cannot be drawn in such a manner as to dilute the voting power of minority groups.

Compactness

The third requirement for redistricting is compactness. While not a constitutional requirement, districts or ward should be drawn in such a manner as to be as compact geographically as possible to prevent districts from encompassing large geographic areas but having a small voting population.

Contiguity

The fourth requirement for redistricting is contiguity. Districts should be contiguous and no part of a district should be entirely separated geographically from any other part of the district.

Preservation of Boundaries

The fifth requirement for redistricting is the preservation of boundaries. This is a requirement that impacts the state and county governments redistricting process more so than municipalities. However, municipalities must still strive to keep general election precincts whole within their municipal election precinct and/or ward boundaries. Ballots are typically printed by their precinct so that each person within a general election precinct receives the exact same ballot as another within the same precinct. Splitting precincts results in multiple versions of ballots being printed and voters within the same precinct electing different representatives for congressional, state, county, and local offices.



Communities of Interest

The final requirement for redistricting is the preservation of communities of interest. Communities of interest are geographic areas comprised of a group of people who share similar policy concerns and should be kept whole within a single district or ward. Policy interest could include racial, social, economic, demographic, environmental, transportation, agricultural, industrial, or other similar features. A community of interest should be able to tell its own unique story that is distinguishable from another surrounding community. Most importantly, communities of interest should be defined by the local community members.

Process and Timeline

The 2022-2023 redistricting process for Commerce City will begin in late 2021 with internal staff meetings for planning and preparation. Roles and responsibilities will be identified for each stakeholder in the process. The city clerk will be the project manager and will work with a team comprised of members from the city manager's office, city attorney's office, community development department, GIS division within the information technology department, and economic development.

The city will utilize various outreach tools such as social media and website posts, updates at council meetings, and communities of interest map drives using Representable.org as part of the redistricting process. Representable.org's mission is to give communities a voice in drawing voting districts. The website provides an easy to use tool for all community members, businesses, and organizations to draw their communities of interest and define their shared interests for the community, city council, and staff. These map drives will help guide city staff draft maps throughout 2022 and early 2023. Throughout the entire process, the community is encouraged to get involved in submitting maps and written comments, attending council meetings virtually and/or in-person, and getting the word out to their neighbors, family, and friends to complete their own maps.

Throughout September and October 2021, city staff will have internal meetings to discuss the statuses of the state and county redistricting processes, and census data for Commerce City,.

December 2021

Staff will present the final draft of this plan along with a timeline of the process to city council for feedback and approval.

January 2022

Representable.org map drives will go live. The City clerk's Office will host information sessions to inform the community of the redistricting process. In-person Spanish translation services will be provided at all meetings.

February 2022 – March 2022

The City clerk's Office will host information sessions to inform the community of the redistricting process. In-person Spanish translation services will be provided at all meetings.



April 2022 – August 2022

Staff will continue to advertise and solicit community of interest maps and comments from the community. This will include regular notices in the Connected newsletter, the city website and social media pages, updates at city council regular meetings and study sessions, engaging with community groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, Cultivando, Adelante, the Latino Engagement Taskforce, and more, and having a presence at as many events within the city as practical.

September 2022 - October 2022

Staff will begin processing and analyzing the communities of interest maps, comments, feedback, state and county maps, and data available to begin drafting preliminary maps.

November 2022

Staff will have the preliminary maps to present to city council and the public. Staff will ask for final comments on the preliminary maps for the remainder of 2022.

January 2023

Staff will present the final ward maps to council for introduction and approval on first reading by the city council.

February 2023

City council will approve on second and final reading the ward maps. Within 10 days of passage on second and final reading, the city clerk will supply the new ward boundary maps to the Adams County Clerk & Recorder for use in the 2023 and subsequent municipal elections.

Throughout 2023, city staff will make every effort to educate voters and candidates for city council aware of the new ward boundaries ahead of the November 2023 municipal election.

Mapping Drives

Representatable.org will be used as a community engagement tool during the redistricting process. Community members are able to submit their community of interest maps with an easy to use website that provides English and Spanish translations.

Community members start by visiting the portal and learning about the process of redistricting and its importance. They will then provide their name and address. The portal will then explain what a community of interest is and an example of what a community of interest could look like. The portal will then ask for information on what defines the community of interest such as community activities, services, and cultural, historical, economic, environmental interest, and community needs and concerns.

Finally, the community member can draw their map by selecting census block groups or individual census blocks themselves. Once they've submitted their map, they'll be taken to a confirmation screen to view and share their map, download a copy of their map, and view nearby community maps.



A public portal will be available where the public can view all maps collected during the entirety of the process.

Resources

[City's Website](#)

[City's Charter](#)

[City's Revised Municipal Code](#)

[City's Boards and Commissions](#)

[City's Budget & Financial Reports](#)

[City council, Boards, and Commissions Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes](#)

[Colorado Constitution](#)

[Colorado Revised Statutes](#)

[Colorado Independent Redistricting Commission Website](#)

[United States Census Bureau Website](#)

[Representable.org](#)