

Wards Advisory Committee

Work Session

July 2, 2024

Subject: Presentation Regarding Wards Advisory Committee and  
Municipal Districts Governance

Prepared By: Pam Anderson, Consultant

Background Information:

On November 7, 2023, the Westminster voters set a vision and approved an advisory question to “propose by 2024 a system of electing some or all City Council members from geographic wards rather than at large”. In March, City Council introduced the redistricting process and the principles and practices to move forwards. The City Council emphasized the importance of community input in defining the governance structure and the boundaries.

The City Council passed Ordinance No. 4249, where the Council formed the Wards Advisory Committee. The committee consists of seven (7) regular members from the community appointed by each Councilor and the Mayor. The members serve in an advisory capacity to discuss and evaluate and submit recommendation(s) regarding a wards system of representation for referral to the 2024 General Election Ballot. The recommendation shall be submitted no later than July 22, 2024.

The scope of the committee’s work shall include and be limited to the following objectives:

Objective 1: the number of wards or districts; and

Objective 2: the number of Councilors per ward/district and at-large, if any, including a Mayor elected at-large.

The drawing of ward/district boundaries or maps shall not be part of the Committee’s scope of duties at this time.

A presentation will give an overview of the legal considerations, timelines, and the principles and best practices for creating electoral districts. The work session will also include a workshop to review data and facilitate discussion.

For further reading:

Ordinance No. 4249: Wards Advisory Committee	<a href="#">Ordinance 4249</a>
City of Westminster 2023 Housing Needs Assessment	<a href="https://www.westminsterco.gov/Business/EconomicDevelopment/HousingNeedsAssessment">https://www.westminsterco.gov/Business/EconomicDevelopment/HousingNeedsAssessment</a>
The 2020 Census & Local Government Redistricting- What You Need To Know	<a href="https://www.cml.org/home/publications-news/resource-detail/the-2020-census-local-government-redistricting-what-you-need-to-know">https://www.cml.org/home/publications-news/resource-detail/the-2020-census-local-government-redistricting-what-you-need-to-know</a>
Redistricting: A Municipal Perspective, CML legal review, 2021	<a href="#">CML Redistricting: A Municipal Perspective</a>
2023 City of Westminster Ballot Question	Shall the Westminster City Council propose by 2026 a system of electing some or all City Council members from geographic wards rather than at-large? YES NO

Attachments:

Ordinance 4249, Ward Advisory Committee Presentation, Goals and Objectives pdf, CML Council Municipal Governance

# Wards Advisory Committee

Work Session

July 2, 2024

# Work Session



Mission and objectives  
of the Committee



Legal process and  
timeline



Redistricting-an  
overview



Facilitated workshop  
activity



Pam Anderson CMC, CERA, MPA

# Committee Goals and Objectives

Citizen Vision  
2023

- A ballot question to gauge citizen interest in creating city council wards on the ballot.
- “Shall the Westminster City Council propose by 2026 a system of electing some or all City Council members from geographic wards rather than at-large?”
- Passed 53% to 47% in favor.

Council Goal  
2024

- Ordinance 4249
- Reflecting the direction of the citizens, the City Council established a Wards Advisory Committee to solicit community input and recommendations on the governance structure for council consideration.

Wards Advisory Committee  
Recommendation  
Objectives

- Objective #1: Discuss, evaluate, and recommend the number of wards.
- Objective #2: Discuss, evaluate, and recommend the number of Councilors per ward and at-large.

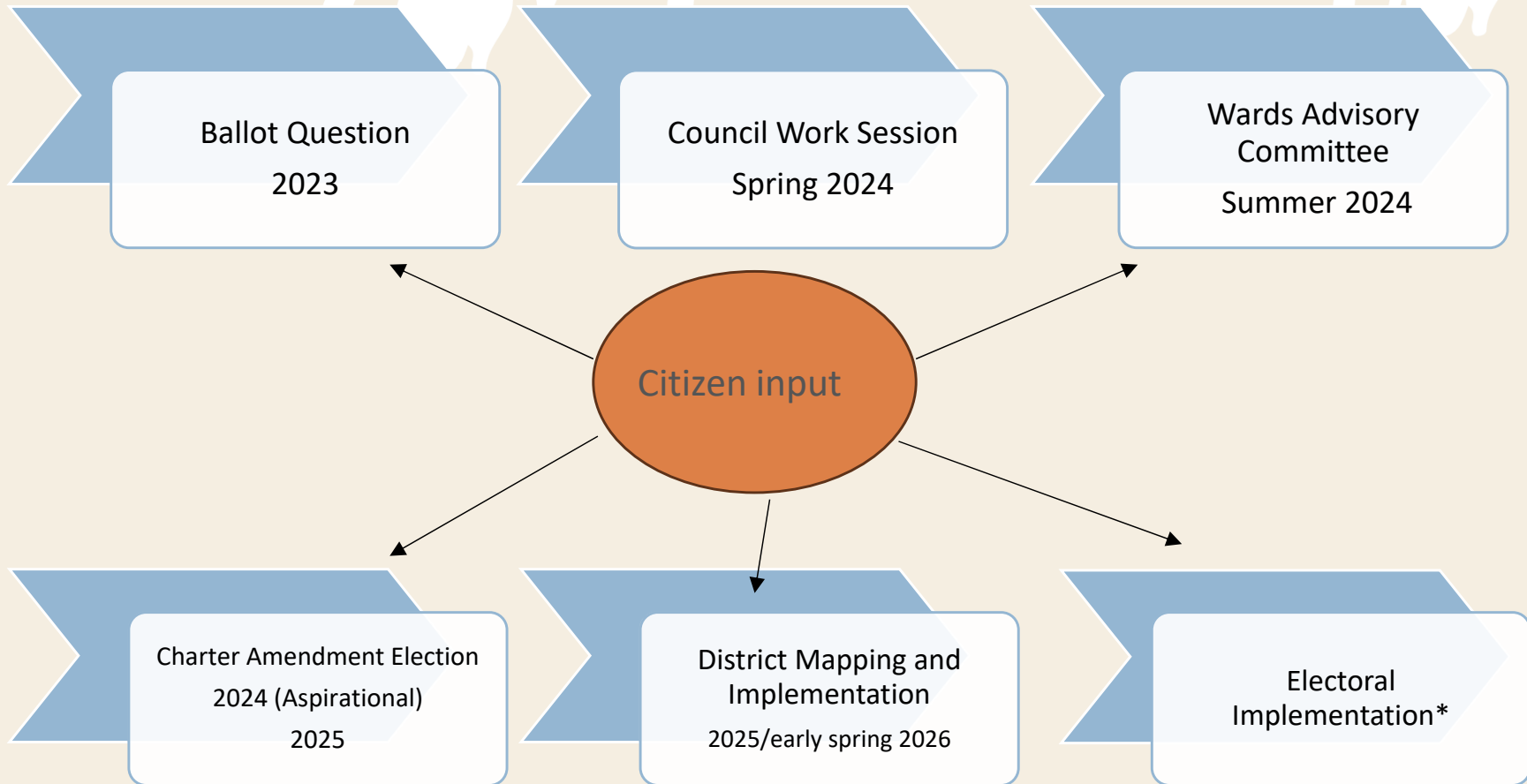
# Legal Context and Timeline

Practical guide to next steps

# Legal Overview

- Wards Advisory Committee
  - Ordinance No. 4249
  - Public committee
  - Sunshine laws and open records laws
- Charter Amendment
  - Identified sections necessary to amend
  - Council resolution to election
  - Election-passage and adoption by the voters
- Implementation
  - Professional practices for district mapping and implementation
  - Legal framework for drawing districts

# Project Timeline



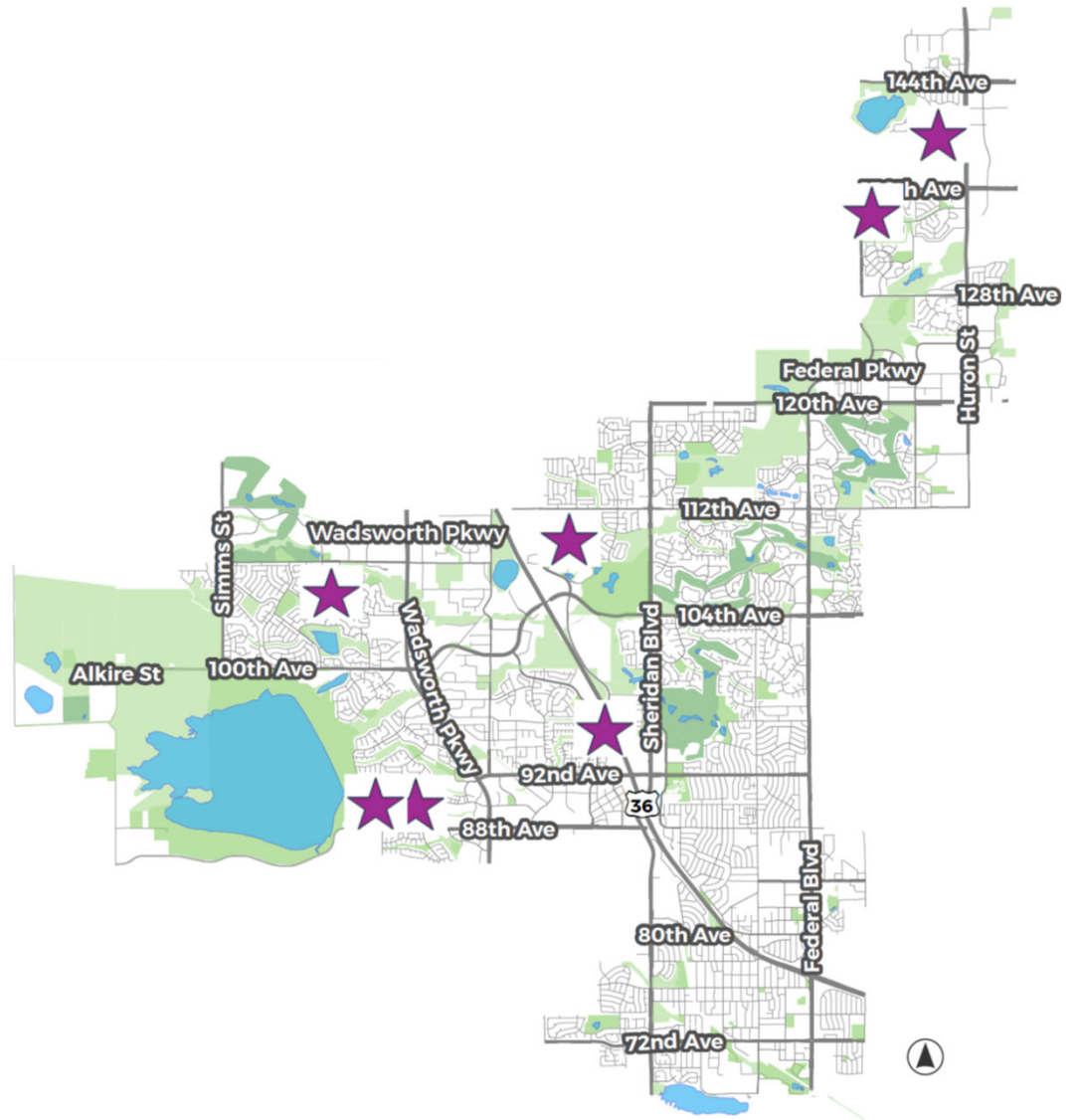


# What is Districting (Redistricting)?

## The Process of Drawing Electoral Districts

Ward: A district, the boundaries of which have been established from which a member of the governing body of a city or town is elected. *C.R.S. 31-1-104(14)*

# Evaluation for Objectives



# Principles

**Population balanced.**

In compliance with all local, state and federal law including the Federal Voting rights Act.

Preserve electoral district lines (precincts)

Compactness

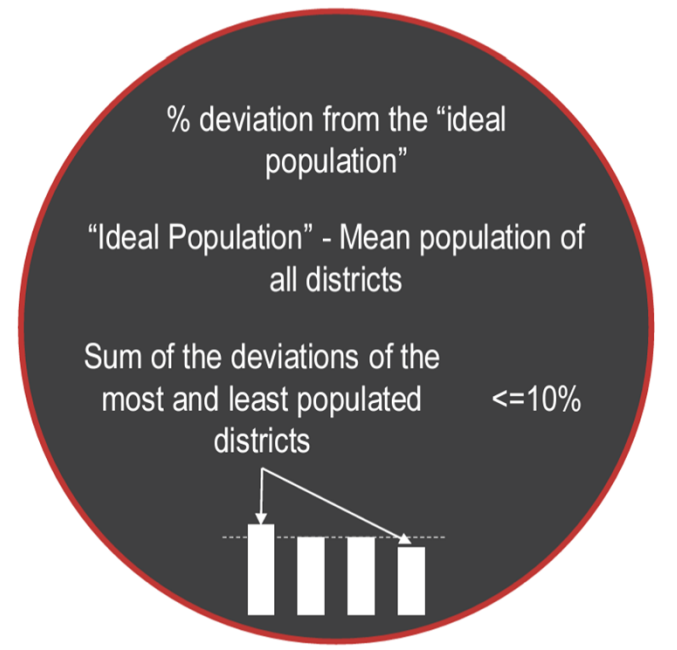
Contiguity

Preserve communities of mutual interest.  
communities of interest.

Incumbent residency....

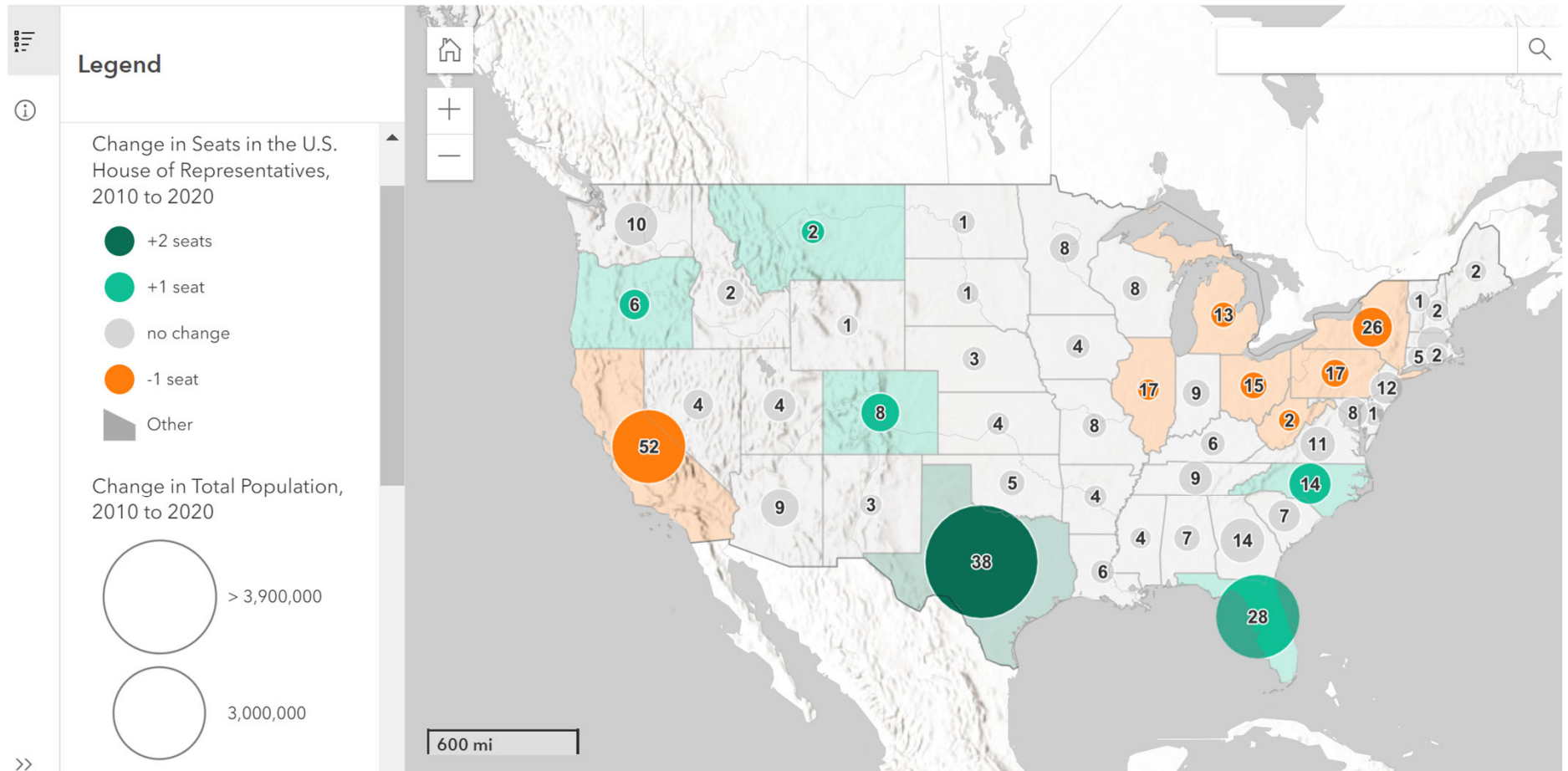
# Balancing Population

- One Person, One Vote (Equal Protection Clause)
- The appropriate measure of population when considering substantial equality of population is total population % deviation from the “ideal population” , not alternative measures like the number of voters or the citizen voting-age population (CVAP).



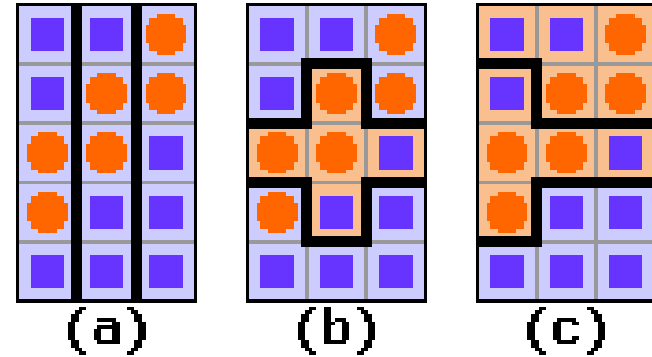
# 2020 Census

2020 Population Change & Seats Gained/Lost

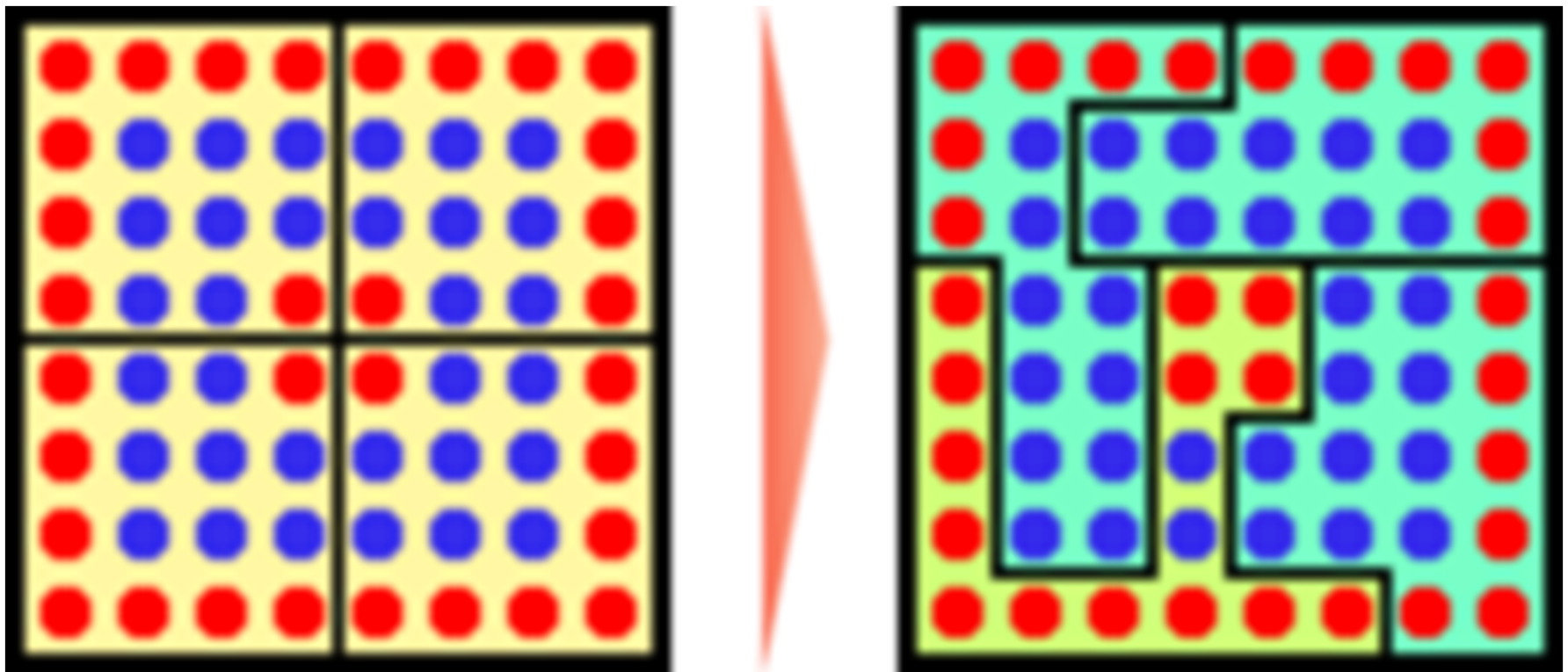


<https://esrimedia.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/minimalist/index.html?appid=01665aaebb1d45bfaa405564f82071b1>

# Voting Rights Act and Demographics



# Dilution of racial or political interests



# Objectives for Districts

## Contiguity

NO



YES



- ✓ No islands
- ✓ Except for real islands which should be connected by bridges, tunnels, or ferries

## Compactness

NO



YES



- ✓ Districts should not be unnecessarily thin or serpentine
- ✓ There are many different methods to measure compactness

2020 Census

## Existing or Natural Boundaries

YES



- ✓ Major streets and roads
- ✓ Rivers, lakes, mountains
- ✓ Lines that are already being used as boundaries



# Objectives for Committee

## **All At-large**

**Ballot question advised wards plan.**

## **Wards with at-large Mayor**

Urban municipalities, or suburban/rural most common governance model. As population grows and density increases, municipalities tend to move more toward geographic representation.

## **Option 3 (hybrid): Wards, 2 at-large districts and Mayor**

Preserves district representation as well as advantages of at-large representation.

## **Number of Districts & Members**

Workshop will evaluate considerations & data.

# Options for Districts

Municipality	Population	# of councillors, incl. mayor & mayor pro tem	# of councillors elected at large, by district/ward	# of districts & representation per district/ward	Avg population per district
Two counties					
City & County					
Adams or Jeffco					
Hybrid					
☞ Denver	715,522	13	2 at large, 11 by district	11 districts, 1 each	65,047
☞ Colorado Springs, Colorado	478,961	9	3 at large, 6 by district	6 districts, 1 each	79,826
☞ Aurora, Colorado	386,261	11	4 at large, 6 wards	6 wards, 1 each	64,376
☞ Fort Collins, Colorado	169,810	7	6 by district	6 districts, 1 each	28,301
☞ Lakewood, Colorado	155,984	11	by wards	3 wards, 2 each	51,994
☞ Arvada, Colorado	124,402	7	2 at large, 4 by district	4 districts, 1 each	31,100
☞ <b>Westminster, Colorado</b>	<b>116,317</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>at large</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>116,317</b>
☞ Pueblo, Colorado	111,876	7	3 at large, 4 by district	4 districts, 1 each	27,969
☞ Greeley, Colorado	108,795	7	2 at large, 4 by wards	4 wards, 1 each	27,198
☞ Boulder, Colorado	108,250	9	at large	none	108,250

BREAK





# Q&A and Discussion

Facilitated Workshop

# Next Meeting

Tuesday, July 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM

Next steps....

BY AUTHORITY

ORDINANCE NO. **4249**

COUNCILLOR'S BILL NO. **15**

SERIES OF 2024

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLORS

**DeMott, Nurmela**

A BILL

FOR AN ORDINANCE CREATING THE WARDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, in November 2023, Westminster voters approved an advisory ballot question that read, "Shall the Westminster City Council propose by 2026 a system of electing some or all City Council members from geographic wards rather than at-large?"; and

WHEREAS, City Council has expressed interest in forming a Wards Advisory Committee with the purpose of developing recommendations to City Council on the governance structure of a wards proposal; and

WHEREAS, City Council now desires to adopt the following ordinance creating the Wards Advisory Committee.

THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER ORDAINS:

Section 1. Creation and Term. There is hereby established the Wards Advisory Committee, hereinafter referred to as "the Committee," consisting of up to seven (7) regular members to be appointed by the City Council, with each Councilor naming one (1) individual to the Committee.

Section 2. Advisory Members. In addition to the regular members identified above, the Committee shall further consist of one (1) City Councilor appointed by the Mayor, one (1) member of the City Clerk's Office, and one (1) attorney from the City Attorney's Office. Such members shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Committee, shall have the right to participate in all meetings of the Committee, but shall not have the right to vote.

- (A) The City Clerk's Office member shall: (1) provide perspective and logistical guidance relating to the conduct of elections and similar matters; and (2) be responsible for recording the minutes of the meetings, storing the Committee's records, and ensuring Committee members receive meeting agenda materials.
- (B) The City Attorney's Office member shall act as the Committee's legal advisor.

Section 3. Duties of Committee.

- (A) The Committee shall discuss and evaluate, and submit to the City Council no later than July 22, 2024, one or more recommendations for a wards systems of representation for the City of Westminster (hereinafter, "Wards Systems") for the City Council's consideration for referral to the 2024 General Election ballot.
- (B) The Committee's submittal(s) to the City Council shall include only the following: (i) the number of wards or districts; and (ii) the number of Councilors per ward/district and at-large, if any, including a Mayor elected at-large.
- (C) The drawing of ward/district boundaries or maps shall not be part of the Committee's scope of duties at this time. In the event a Wards System is approved by Westminster voters, the City Council may choose to reconstitute the Committee in 2025 to provide input on ward/district boundaries. Accordingly, the Committee shall focus its limited time and

resources solely on the number of wards or districts and the number of Councillors per ward/district and at-large, if any, and shall neither discuss in its meetings nor present in its submittal(s) to the City Council any ward/district boundaries or maps.

- (D) Upon submittal of one or more Wards Systems, the City Council shall decide, at a public meeting, whether to adopt or amend a Wards Systems recommendation by ballot referral ordinance to the 2024 General Election ballot. In the event the City Council does not approve a submitted Wards System for referral to the 2024 ballot, the City Council may instruct City staff to bring forward an alternate ballot proposal for voter consideration, or may table the question until a later time.

Section 4. Meetings; Quorum. The Committee shall decide on meeting dates and times. A record of the minutes of each meeting shall be kept and placed in the office of the City Clerk for public inspection. Except as provided by Westminster Municipal Code (W.M.C.) section 2-1-6(A), all meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public. Each member of the Committee shall be required to vote on each item before the Committee unless a conflict of interest has been determined to exist. A quorum shall consist of a majority of those members entitled to act, and a decision of a majority of the quorum of such members shall control.

Section 5. Officers; Duties. The Committee shall elect a Committee Chair and Vice-Chair at the Committee’s first meeting.

- (A) The Chair shall preside at all meetings, shall rule on all points of order or procedure unless overruled by a majority vote of the members present, and shall sign any documents for the proceedings of the Committee over which the Chair presided.
- (B) In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair, the City Clerk’s Office member shall call the Committee to order and call the roll of members. If a quorum is present, the Committee shall choose, by majority vote of those present, an acting chair for the meeting.

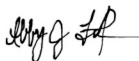
Section 6. By and through this ordinance, the Wards Advisory Committee is exempt from the restrictions contained in section 2-1-1(B), W.M.C., and, thereby, current members of City boards and commissions shall be authorized and eligible to serve on the Wards Advisory Committee. Further, in the event any part of this ordinance conflicts, or is inconsistent, with any other provision of the Westminster Municipal Code, this ordinance shall control as to the subject matter of hereof and shall be interpreted in a manner that bests accomplish the goals and intent of this ordinance.

Section 7. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage after second reading. The title and purpose of this ordinance shall be published prior to its consideration on second reading. The full text of this ordinance shall be published within ten (10) days after its enactment after second reading.

INTRODUCED, PASSED ON FIRST READING, AND TITLE AND PURPOSE ORDERED PUBLISHED this 13th day of May, 2024.


















PASSED, ENACTED ON SECOND READING, AND FULL TEXT ORDERED PUBLISHED this 20th day of May, 2024.

ATTEST:










  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

*Nancy McNally*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:  
  
*David Frankel*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney’s Office

Council Governance					
Municipality	Population	# of councillors, incl. mayor & mayor pro tem	# of councillors elected at large, by district/ward	# of districts & representation per district/ward	Avg population per district
Two counties					
City & County					
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 Denver	715,522	13	2 at large, 11 by district	11 districts, 1 each	65,047
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 Boulder, Colorado	108,250	9	at large	none	108,250
 Broomfield, Colorado	74,112	11	10 by wards	5 wards, 2 each	14,822
 Grand Junction, Colorado	65,560	7	2 at large, 5 by district	5 ward, 1 each	13,112
 Littleton, Colorado	45,652	7	3 at large, 4 by district	4 wards, 1 each	11,413
 Brighton, Colorado	40,083	9	4 wards, 2 each	4 wards, 1 each	10,021
 Northglenn, Colorado	38,131	9	8 by ward	4 wards, 2 each	9,535
 Windsor, Colorado	32,716	7	1 at large, 6 by district	6 districts, 1 each	6,286
 Wheat Ridge, Colorado	32,398	9	1 at large, 8 by district	4 districts, 2 each	8,099



<b>Council Governance</b>					
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b># of councillors, incl. mayor &amp; mayor pro tem</b>	<b># of councillors elected at large, by district/ward</b>	<b># of districts &amp; representation per district/ward</b>	<b>Avg population per district</b>
 Golden, Colorado	20,399	7	1 at large, 2 by district, 4 wards	Mayor at large; 4 elected from wards; 2 are elected from districts (District 1 includes Wards 1 & 2, District 2 includes 3&4;	10199/5099
 Durango, Colorado	19,071	5	at large	none	19,071
 Cañon City, Colorado	17,141	8	3 at large, 4 by district	4 districts, 1 each	4,285
 Federal Heights, Colorado	14,382	7	6 by ward	3 wards, 2 each	4,794
 Glenwood Springs, Colorado	9,963	7	2 at large, 5 by district	5 wards, 1 each	1,992
 Alamosa, Colorado	9,806	7	3 at large, 4 by ward	4 wards, 1 each	2,451
 Edgewater, Colorado	5,005	7	at large	none	5,005
 Pagosa Springs, Colorado	1,571	7	4 at large, 3 by district	3 districts, 1 each	523
 Mountain View, Colorado	541	7	at large	none	541

Source: Colorado Municipal League