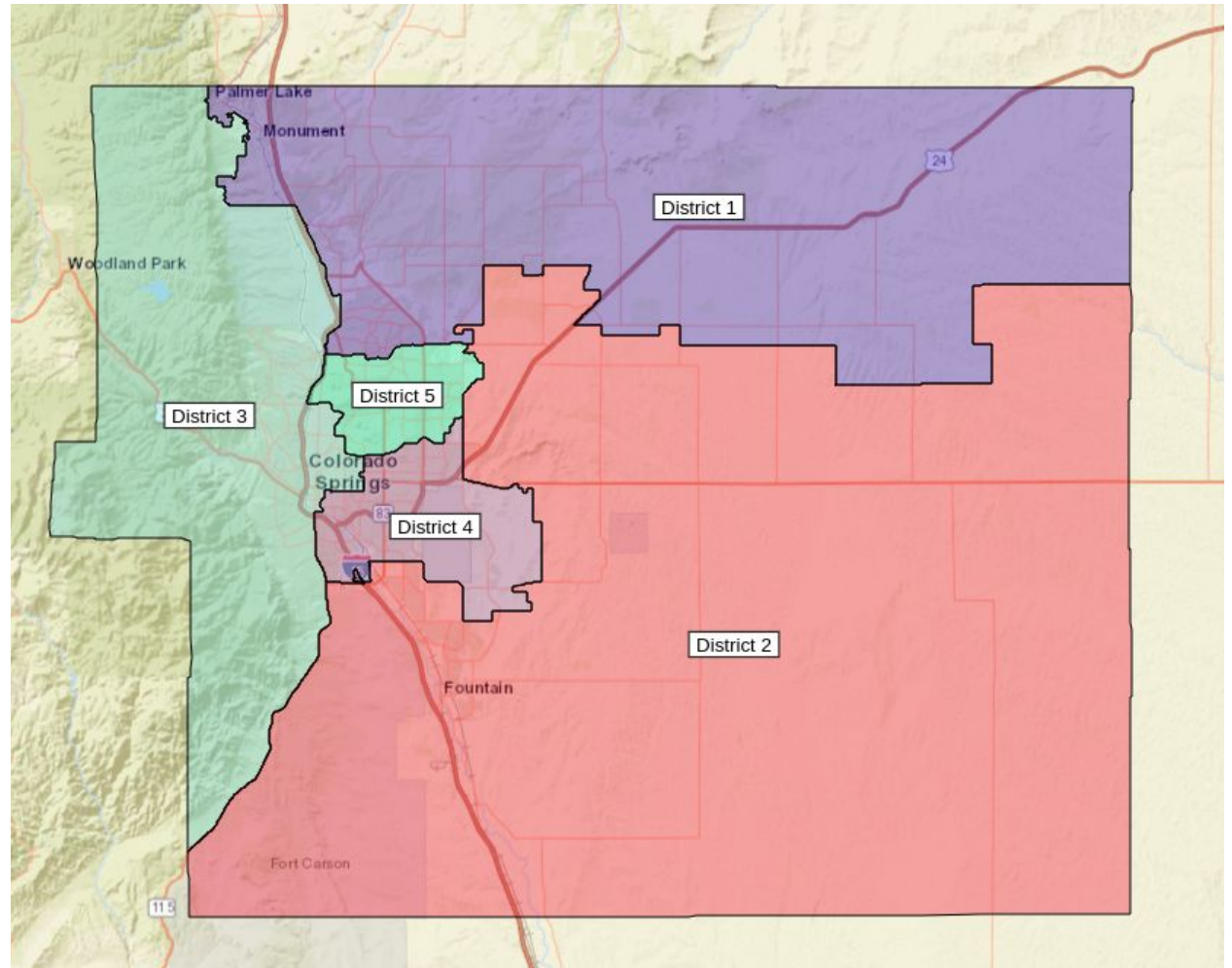# Carlos' El Paso County Commissioner Redistricting Plan Proposal

July 12, 2023
Amended July 27, 2023

Map Overview

Highlights

- Unites the Southeast Colorado Springs large and compact urban minority population
- Unites the Tri-Lakes suburban / large lot residential area (and anticipates a municipal annexation by the Town of Monument)
- Keeps the Black Forest whole (with exception of SE precinct near the Falcon regional center)
- Moves the USAFA into the westside district
- Provides three Commissioner districts with a military base in their district
- Prioritizes keeping named Colorado Springs neighborhoods whole
- Keeps the Falcon regional center whole
- Creates two districts that represent the small towns and rural Eastern Plains
- Keeps Fountain, Security, Widefield and Fort Carson together
- Strives to keep managed lands together
- Strives to use major roadways and geographical features as boundaries
- Reduces the population within the allowed deviation for the eastern districts (1, 2, 4) to accommodate for growth
- Thereafter, creates two politically competitive districts

Background

- Carlos Perez, 29 year resident of Colorado Springs (Commissioner District 1)
- Unaffiliated voter
- 2020: appointed by City Council and served as chairman of the nonpartisan Colorado Springs City Council Districting Process Advisory Committee
- 2021: appointed by a nonpartisan panel of retired judges to serve on the inaugural Colorado Independent Legislative Redistricting Commission (elected by my fellow commissioners to serve as chairman)
- Extensive experience in applying redistricting criteria and using redistricting tools for analyzing and constructing fair maps

Description

The primary design goal of this proposed plan is to fairly unite the large and cohesive minority population in southeast Colorado Springs while respecting the distinct urban and suburban neighborhoods and rural communities in the county.

Map Deliverables

This proposal is submitted in two formats but otherwise identical copies:

1. Esri Redistricting Tool:
    https://elpasoco-redistricting.esriemcs.com/redistricting/

    Search for plan "cperez-proposal-20230712"

2. Dave's Redistricting App (DRA):
    https://davesredistricting.org/join/cf6f94ff-bec9-4f80-b5ab-255db2b9e4cd

    Note: some 2020 census blocks do not nest compactly within the 2022 precincts because of residential parcel adjustments per C.R.S. § 2-2-507(2.5)(a) and population growth since 2020. The nonpartisan staff is expected to make *de minimus* adjustments to "snap" to the actual precinct boundaries.
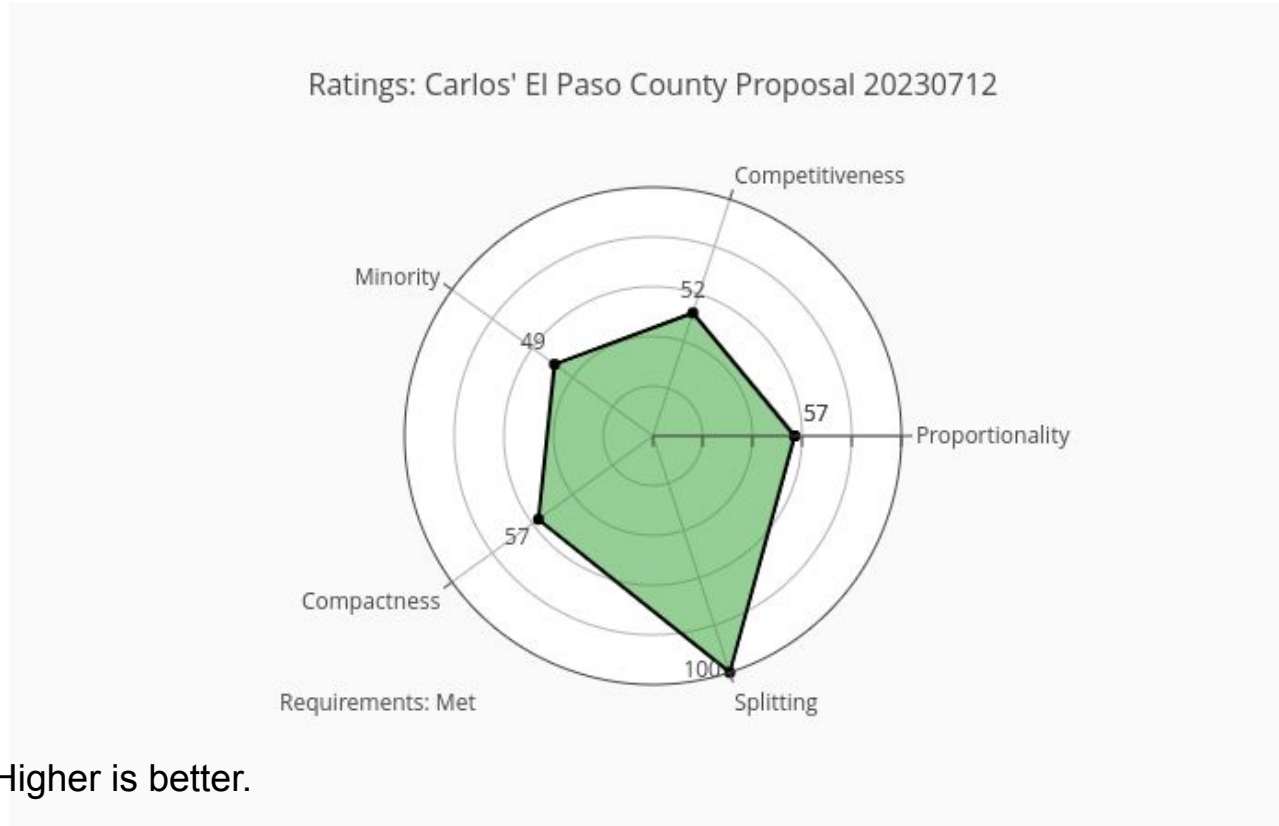
Sources

- UCCS GeoCivics redistricting resources: https://geocivics.uccs.edu/
- Citizen testimony from the 6/12, 6/21, 7/6 and 7/10 hearings
- EPC online comments portal
- Maps reviewed: C&R maps A - E, 1 - 8, and various commissioner draft/working maps
- Citizen maps reviewed: Czukas and Landgraf
- Documents referenced:
  - El Paso County Master Plan (adopted May 26, 2021)
  - Colorado Springs Comprehensive Master Plan (PlanCOS) (January 2019)
  - Urban Land Institute Report: Southeast Colorado Springs Healthy Places (January 7 - 12, 2018)
  - Headwaters Economics Socioeconomic Profiles (https://headwaterseconomics.org/eps)
  - Redistricting Law 2020, National Conference of State Legislatures

Overlays / Shapefiles Used

- Current county commissioner districts and precincts
- Colorado Springs neighborhoods
- School districts
- City of Colorado Springs City Council districts
- Colorado House and Senate legislative maps
- Municipal boundaries and census-designated places (CDP)
- City of Colorado Springs WUI fire map (SpringsView)
- USPS ZIP codes
- OpenStreetMap base layer

DRA Radar Chart Ratings

Ratings: Carlos' El Paso County Proposal 20230712

50% = OK. Higher is better.

Population Summary Report

District No.	TOTAL Population	Target Population	Target Deviation	Target Deviation (%)	Non-Hispanic/ Latino White (%)	Hispanic or Latino (%)	Non-Hispanic/ Latino Black (%)	Hispanic or Latino voting age population (%)
D1	144,208	146,555	-2,347	-1.6	76.72	9.84	2.39	6.31
D2	144,528	146,555	-2,027	-1.38	60.31	20.01	7.76	12.68
D3	150,136	146,555	3,581	2.44	75.49	12.46	3.02	9.1
D4	144,209	146,555	-2,346	-1.6	47.72	30.81	10.3	20.23
D5	149,692	146,555	3,137	2.14	67.96	16.19	4.85	10.77

Population Deviation

TOTAL Population:	732,773
Mean Target Population:	146,555
Mean Deviation:	2,688
Mean Percent Deviation:	1.83
Largest Positive Deviation:	3,581
Largest Negative Deviation:	-2,347
Overall Range in Deviation:	5,928
Overall Range in Deviation Percentage:	4.04

Competitiveness

District	PVI 2016/2020[1]	2022 CO Gov PI[2]	2022 US Sen PI[2]	2022 state PI[3]	2022 county PI[4]
D1	R+20.13	22.85%	29.65%	33.66%	40.96%
D2	R+17.15	14.66%	20.15%	26.22%	32.76%
D3	R+1.18	-14.34%	-8.94%	-4.52%	6.26%
D4	R+0.84	-17.06%	-12.92%	-6.39%	1.07%
D5	R+12.14	4.87%	9.78%	15.55%	24.19%

Note 1: Cook Partisan Voting Index 2016/2020 methodology. Data from DRA.

Note 2: Partisan index (PI) for Colorado state governor. PI = R/total - D/total. Positive numbers indicate R partisan lean; negative numbers indicate a D partisan lean. Countywide for governor, the Republican won by **50.66% vs 46.82%**. Countywide for US Senator, the Republican won by **52.76% vs 43.72%**. Source: https://results.enr.clarityelections.com/CO/El_Paso/115926/web.307039/#/summary?v=314526%2F

Note 3: Average of down ballot statewide races: state treasurer, attorney general, board of education at-large. 2022 SOS election not included because it became a high visibility race and was an outlier.

Note 4: Average of down ballot El Paso County races: county assessor, clerk and recorder, county sheriff, county treasurer.

DRA Partisan Lean

District	Democrat	Republican	Other
1	29.16%	66.77%	4.07%
2	33.02%	61.32%	5.67%
3	47.42%	47.98%	4.60%
4	47.94%	45.55%	6.51%
5	36.89%	57.81%	5.30%
TOTAL	38.58%	56.36%	5.06%

Election Result: Composite of 2016 Pres, 2020 Pres, 2016 Sen, 2020 Sen, 2018 Gov, 2018 AG

Competitive Measurements Context Narrative

- To prevent election outliers from single races from skewing the analysis, it is preferred to use a composite average of down ballot races rather than high visibility (and politically polarized) races.
- Election data suggests ticket splitting. Republican are strong at the county level, but at the state level, it is weaker, voters lean Republican.
- 1 out of 20 voters in El Paso County are not voting Democratic or Republican. Nearly 49% of active voters in El Paso County are unaffiliated with a political party according to the SOS. The contributory effect is that Republicans and Democrats are achieving a mere plurality in proposed Districts 3 and 4 in previous elections.
- A common heuristic is a 10% band for competitiveness. For proposed District 3 and 4, this suggests that the potential is reasonable that "the party affiliation of the district's county commissioner to change at least once between federal decennial censuses." (C.R.S. § 30-10-306.3(d))
- Furthermore, the proportionality of partisanship is far from being evenly distributed throughout the county. Because of the factors and forces driving the "Big Sort", which El Paso County is not immune, the urban areas are trending Democratic while the suburban and exurban areas are strong Republican, resulting in chronic "partisan bubbles" that undermine civic participation (see also https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/04/30/opinion/politics/bubble-politics.html)

Compactness

District	Polygon Area (sq. mi)	Perimeter (mi)	Reock	Polsby Popper	Holes
D1	532.19	149.08	0.3	0.3	0
D2	1,170.48	196.6	0.45	0.38	0
D3 *	326.15	115.95	0.27	0.3	0
D4	67.3	50.46	0.55	0.33	0
D5	34.55	28.65	0.52	0.53	0

* Compactness is related to the traditional redistricting principle of contiguity. Contiguity is interpreted as being able to travel to all parts of a district without ever leaving it. This is sometimes impossible for mountainous terrain. To conform to this redistricting principle, the goal for District 3 was to minimize the land area that was necessary to exit the district and then reenter it to reach another point within the district.
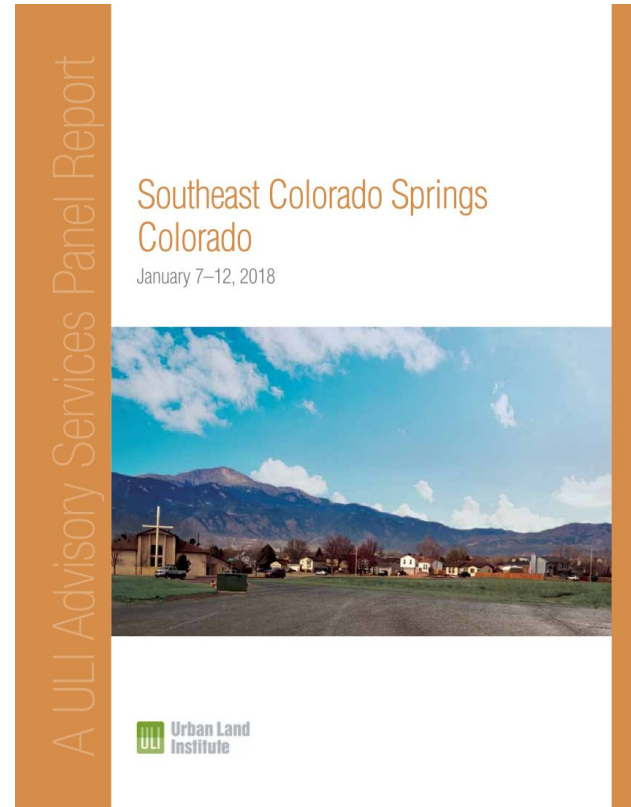
July 27, 2023
Perez Supplemental Information

Reasons for the boundary selections of the Perez map

1) Per statute, keep the minority groups Southeast COS area as unified as possible in D4. This is the starting point.
2) To achieve population balance and a more compact D3, it was necessary to extend some existing central districts eastward past Powers Blvd.

Southeast COS

In addition to census data and public comments, the proposed District 4 relied on geographic descriptions from the **Urban Land Institute** report **Healthy Places: Promoting Equitable and Healthy Communities in Southeast Colorado Springs** (January 2018):

- ZIP codes 80910 and 80916
- *"bounded by Pikes Peak Avenue and East Platte Avenue on the north, Highways 21 and 24 on the east, Milton E. Proby Parkway and South Academy Boulevard on the south, and US 85/87 and Hancock Avenue on the west."*
- Considers demographics of Harrison School District 2

A ULI Advisory Services Panel Report

Southeast Colorado Springs
Colorado

January 7–12, 2018

Urban Land Institute

Source: https://americas.uli.org/southeast-colorado-springs-colorado-advisory-services-panel/
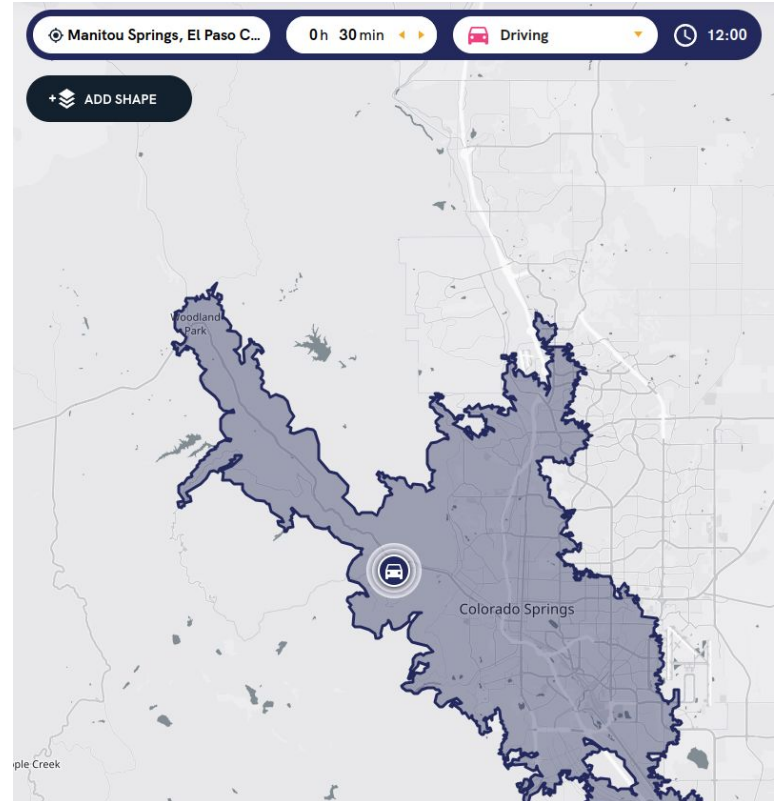
Proposed D3 is more compact and contiguous

Contiguity is a traditional redistricting principle. It is "***being able to travel to all parts of a district without ever leaving it.***" Redistricting Law 2020, National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).

This is not always possible with managed lands, large bodies of water, and the mountainous terrain we have in Colorado.

An **isochrone map** (travel time) confirms that not all points of the proposed D3 are equally reachable in the same amount of time. Also you need roads that leave some parts of the district to reach other parts. Thus, better compactness and contiguity were factored into the design to minimize the need to leave and reenter the district and improve travel time.
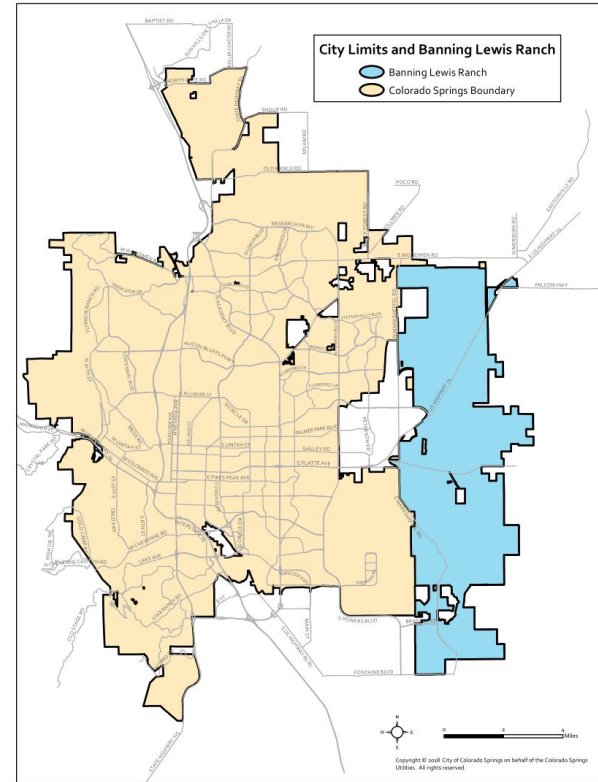
Source: https://app.traveltime.com/

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BLR is no longer an "island"

The **Banning-Lewis Ranch Annexation Amendment of 2018** made BLR conform to the development planning processes of Colorado Springs:

"Banning Lewis Ranch used to be an "island," two miles east of the developed part of the city. Today, it is a connected part of Colorado Springs bordering current developments on the west side of Marksheffel Road."

Source: https://coloradosprings.gov/blr

City Limits and Banning Lewis Ranch
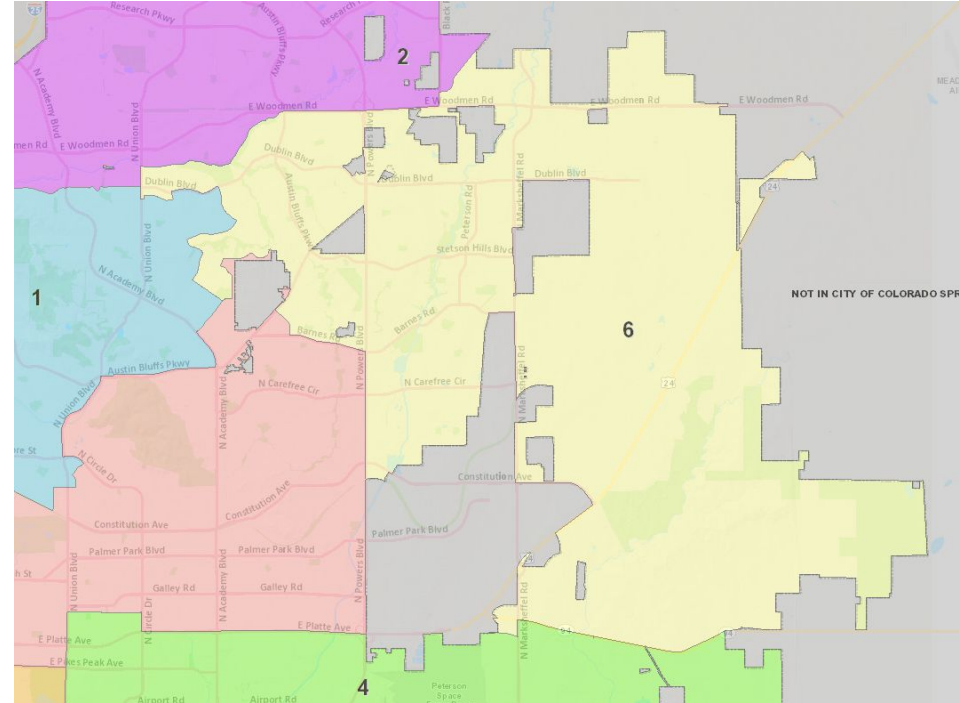Banning Lewis Ranch
Colorado Springs Boundary

Review of City Council District 6

The statute requires, as is reasonably possible, to preserve whole political subdivisions.

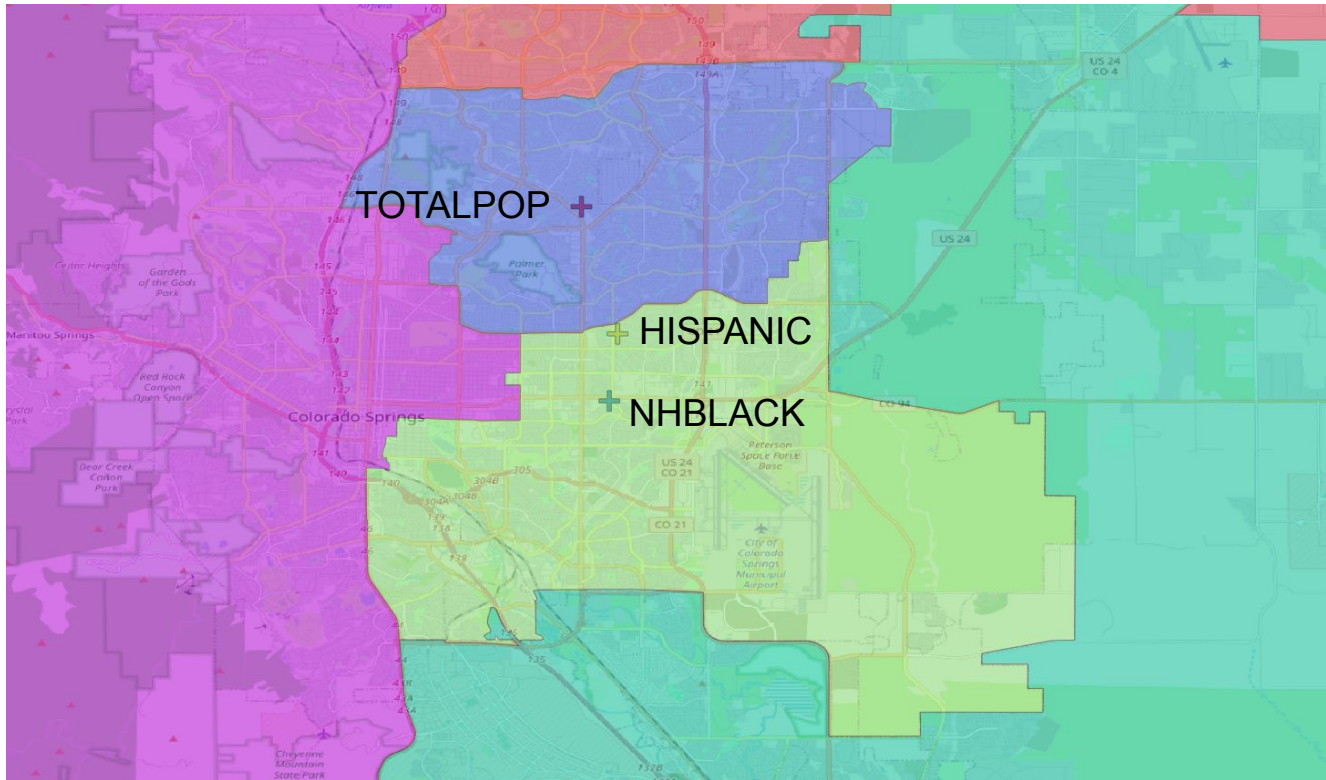City Council District 6 encompasses the Powers Blvd and Marksheffel Rd north-south travel corridors.

Source:

https://coloradosprings.gov/city-clerk/page/city-council-districts

Weighted mean center for population is in proposed D5

TOTALPOP

HISPANIC

NHBLACK

Source: QGIS

Conclusion

- I reserve the right to amend this proposal based on new information and constructive feedback from the public and the redistricting commission.
- To ensure transparency and to respect the citizen engagement process, comments should be provided using the public portal at https://www.elpasoco.com/redistricting/ or at publicly-noticed hearings of the commission.