



**WARDS ADVISORY
COMMITTEE WORK SESSION
MINUTES
JULY 9, 2024 at 5:30 PM
Colorado River Room**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Abby Fitch, the City Clerk, called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m. Fitch announced that the meeting's purpose was to gather input from committee members for the council. She clarified that public comment would not be permitted during this meeting, but feedback could be given during public comment at City Council meetings.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee members present were Bev Bishop, Bill Christopher, Elyce Jarvis, Tom Jurgens, Annie Miller, Anita Seitz, and Dino Valente. Others present included Abby Fitch, City Clerk, Greg Graham, Deputy City Attorney, Mat Munch, Assistant City Attorney and Pam Anderson, President of Consilium Colorado.

3. CITY CLERK'S REPORT

Fitch reported that the previously tentative meeting on July 18, 2024, will take place at City Hall at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Boardroom.

4. NOMINATION & ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

Fitch distributed ballots to all the voting committee members. The committee was instructed to vote for two people: the person with the most votes would become chair, and the person with the second-highest total of votes would become vice chair. After each member voted, Anderson tallied the votes, announcing that Seitz won the role of chair with five votes and Miller won the role of vice chair with four votes.

5. PRESENTATIONS

- A. *Presentation on Wards Advisory Committee and Municipal Districts Governance*
Anderson then presented to the group, providing background information on the project. She explained that on November 7, 2023, Westminster voters 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, Anderson presented to the City Council. Staff were directed to retain her for consultation on the process and implementation on a Wards system in the city. In June, the City Council passed ordinance 4249 to form a Wards Advisory Committee.

The direction of the committee was discussed, including goals, timelines, and next steps. Anderson described the legal context and the Charter amendments that would be needed. Questions arose about which charter sections would need to be changed and how many ballot questions might be required. There was discussion about past charter changes and why they did not work. Munch stated that he would research the answers he did not know and believed that the

charter could be changed with a single ballot question because it is a single subject. Anderson also discussed principles including constitutional and non-constitutional legal principle to consider, i.e. population balance, the Federal Voting Rights Act, and communities of interest, etc.

B. Facilitated Workshop Regarding Committee Objectives and Recommendations

Anderson then led a facilitated workshop where the committee discussed the principles they valued. These principles included population balance, representation, and political viability. The committee started to explore various governing structures, including:

- 3 Wards, 2 representatives per Ward, all representatives elected at large.
- 3 Wards, 1 representative per Ward, 3 at large, elected within their Ward.
- 4 Wards, 2 people each with staggered terms, 2 at large.
- 5 Wards, 2 representatives per Ward, elected within their Ward.
- 3 Wards, 2 representatives per Ward.
- 4 Wards, 1 representative per Ward, 2 at large.
- 4 Wards, 2 representatives per Ward, 2 at large.
- 4 Wards minimum, with 2 representatives per Ward, 1 or 2 at large.

All structures included the Mayor being elected at large. The meeting concluded with a brief discussion about the agenda for the next meeting.

5. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned by Seitz at 8:52 p.m.

Chair

Attested by

Agenda Memorandum

Agenda Item – 5.A. and 5.B.

Wards Advisory Committee Work Session July 18, 2024

Subject: Presentation on Information for Evaluation and Facilitated Discussion for Recommendations

Prepared by: Pam Anderson, Consultant

Background Information

On July 9, 2024, the Westminster Advisory Committee met and discussed [Municipal Districts Governance](#) and the key objectives for the committee as outlined by the City Council in Ordinance No. 4349 :

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 facilitated workshop and discussion evaluated key population data and the committee participated in an evaluation exercise. The discussion included values and legal principles for a wards system including representation, equity, geographic representation, accessibility to a representative, effective communication, fiscal responsibility, etc. The committee discussed possible options for a wards system that will begin the discussion for further evaluation.

Initial considerations for types of wards systems which included the number of wards, population per wards, the number of at large and per district representatives, staggering terms, opportunities and risks regarding the total number of representatives, and more.

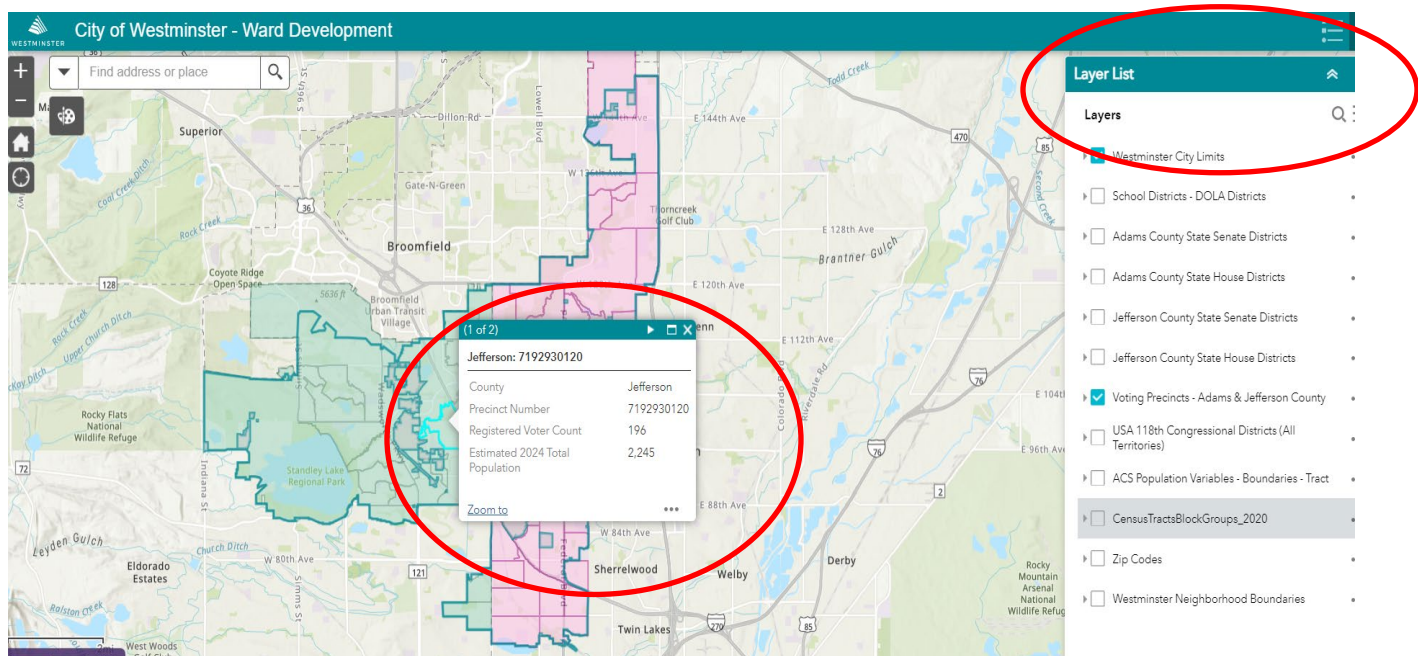
See **Chart 1.** for initial considerations for the systems of wards.

DATA

The committee requested additional data for evaluation. The GIS staff has provided [Ward Development](#) maps for those purposes [here](#). You can also find the link in the resources chart below.

Instructions

Once you are on the webpage, you can activate various layers by clicking in the upper right-hand corner on the Layers List and selecting the checkbox of the layer you wish to view. By clicking on a particular part of the map layer, additional information may be generated in a pop-up box.



Recommendation

For consideration for the committee is distilling one or more recommendation(s) for submittal to the City Council.

The facilitated exercise will consider the initial wards systems and evaluate levels of consensus. Ordinance No. 4249, Section 2. (A) requires the committee to submit to the City Council no later than July 11, 2024, one or more recommendations for a wards system of representation for the City Council's consideration for referral to the 2024 General Election ballot. Given this deadline, it is recommended that the meeting objectives are:

1. Discuss the additional information provided in the evaluation data.
2. Facilitated discussion for consensus and direction to staff for final recommendation(s)
 - a. the number of wards or districts; and
 - b. the number of Councilors per ward/district and at large, if any.

Chart 1. Potential Wards Systems for Further Discussion

No. of Wards/Total	No. of Councilors per Ward	No. of Councilors elected at large*	Est. Population per Ward
One at-large Mayor for each system**			
3 wards/6 councilors	2 each	6 at large	117,800
3 wards/6 councilors	1 each	3 at large	39,266
3 wards/6 councilors	2 each	0	39,266
4 wards/6 councilors	1 each	2 at large	29,450
4 wards/10 councilors	2 each	2 at large	29,450
4 wards/10-11 councilors	2 each	1 or 2 at large	29,450
5 wards/10 councilors	2 each	0	23,560
5 wards/10-12 councilors	2 each	1 or 2 at large	23,560

Staggered terms were a value expressed for several systems.

*at large members represent population of 117,800

** Mayor is elected at large in all systems

Chart 2. Resources

Ordinance No. 4249: Wards Advisory Committee	Ordinance 4249
City of Westminster 2023 Housing Needs Assessment	https://www.westminsterco.gov/Business/EconomicDevelopment/HousingNeedsAssessment
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

<p>Redistricting: A Municipal Perspective, CML legal review, 2021</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CML Redistricting: A Municipal Perspective</p>
<p>2023 City of Westminster Ballot Question</p>	<p>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_</p>
<p>Ward Development Data Maps</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">https://maps.cityofwestminster.us/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=52e8fb920a06476696bd0947861ca5b1</p>