

El Paso County Advisory Redistricting Commission Report



October 18, 2021

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Executive Summary

The El Paso Advisory Redistricting Commission (Commission) is pleased to present this report before Commissioners Court. The Commission adhered to the rules and guidelines given by Commissioners Court, dated June 14, 2021, as revised July 19, 2021.

The Commission, upon review of all public input and of all duly submitted proposed maps, has selected two maps for Commissioners Precincts and one map for Justices of the Peace Precincts.

The criteria utilized to arrive at our decision for both Commissioners Precinct Maps and for the Justices of the Peace Precinct Map included:

- Complies with the Voting Rights Act (VRA)
- Equal populations by jurisdiction [the lower the deviation, the better]
- Jurisdictions to be contiguous
- Jurisdictions to be compact. [the higher the degree of compactness, the better]
- Seek to not break Communities of Interest (COI)
- Complies with all the guidelines as given to us by Commissioners Court

Based on 2020 Census data, each Commissioner precinct has a target population of 216,414. [County population of 865,657 evenly divided between 4 precincts].

Current Commissioners Map with 2020 Census Data: Overall Deviation of 31.06%

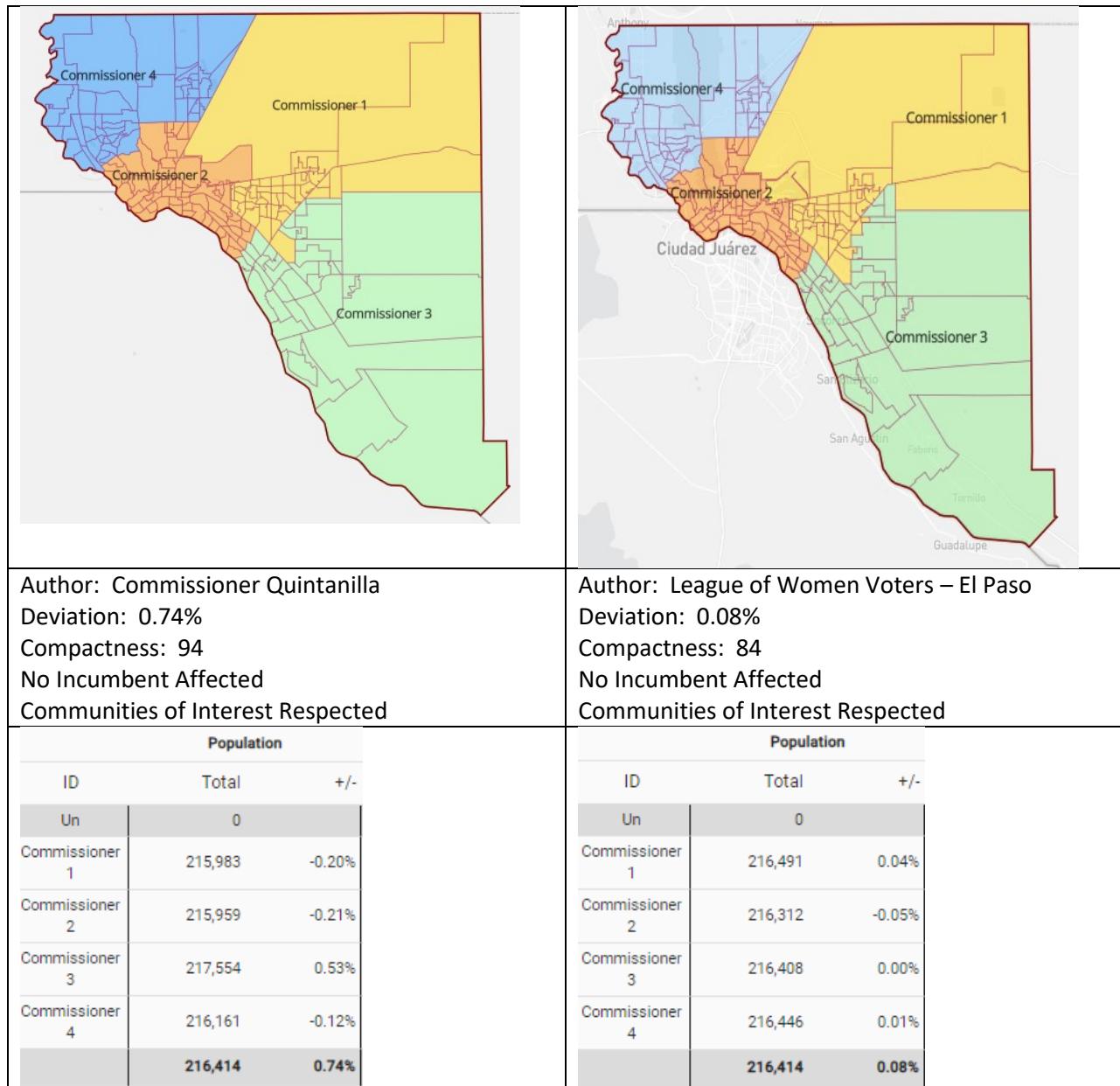
Precinct	Population	Gains/Losses Required
Precinct 1	200,838	+15,578
Precinct 2	194,610	+21,804
Precinct 3	261,839	-45,425
Precinct 4	208,370	+8,044

It was clear that Precinct 3 would have to shrink geographically, while other precincts had to grow geographically.

Each Justice of the Peace has a target population of 108,207 [County population of 865,657 evenly divided between 8 Judges].

Commissioners Maps

The two selected Commissioners maps are very similar. The primary map, introduced by Commissioner Inocente Quintanilla was selected by a 5-3 vote (two Commissioners were absent). The secondary map was introduced by George Ybarra on behalf of the League of Women Voters - El Paso.



General Comments (Applicable to Both Commissioners Maps)

Precinct 1: Gained Ft. Bliss and Far North East Precincts 166 and 167

Precinct 2: Was compacted significantly

Precinct 3: Was compacted by moving out North East Precincts 166 and 167

Precinct 4: A more balanced number of constituents between East and West of the mountain

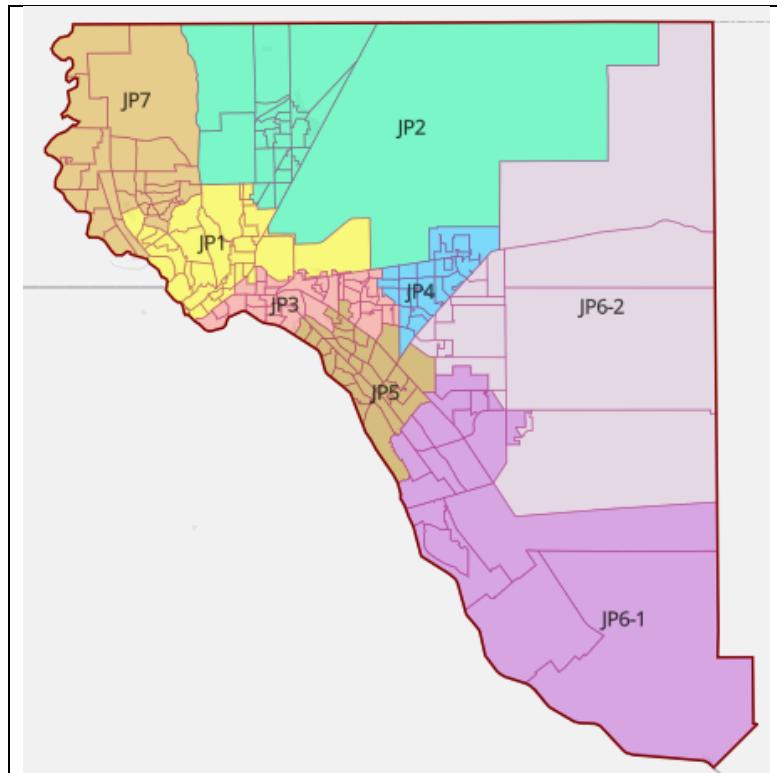
Key Differences

Primary Map	Secondary Map
Precincts 128, 181 and 198 to Precinct 1	Precincts 128, 181 and 198 stay in Precinct 3
Airport stays in Precinct 2	Population surrounding airport stays in Precinct 2, the airport itself moves to Precinct 1
Precincts 124, 125, 129 and 130 to Precinct 3	Precincts 124, 125, 129 and 130 stay in Precinct 1
Did not split current voting precincts	Split 8 current voting precincts

Nine maps were submitted for the Commission's consideration.

Justices of the Peace Map

The Commission unanimously selected the Justice of the Peace Map submitted by Commissioner Alejandra Chavez. A total of eight maps were submitted.



Author: Alejandra Chavez

Deviation: 4.23%

Compactness: 58

No Incumbent Justices or Constables are Affected

Population		
ID	Total	+/-
Un	0	
JP1	106,085	-1.96%
JP2	110,205	1.85%
JP3	108,627	0.39%
JP4	107,240	-0.89%
JP5	107,674	-0.49%
JP7	110,666	2.27%
JP6-1	107,792	-0.38%
JP6-2	107,368	-0.78%
	108,207	4.23%

It must be noted that there was a high level of public comment regarding Justices of the Peace and Constables. The Commission heard their input intently and, still adhering to principles of fair redistricting, unanimously agreed on a map that kept all Justices and Constables within their precinct.

Background Information

The Commission was established by Commissioners Court on June of 2021. It was based on the original proposal by Commissioner David Stout, as amended during its consideration.

Each Commissioner, plus the County Judge, selected two candidates from their district to be in the Commission. An eleventh Commissioner was selected from the County Ethics Commission. The Commission was officially seated on July 22, 2021.

A central concept was to grant the Commission as much independence as legally allowed under the State Constitution. Thus, the recommendations of this Commission are to be reviewed and voted by Commissioners Court.

The Commission held ten public meetings, ensuring that at least one meeting was held in each of the Commissioners precincts. [See Appendix A for all meeting locations]

All submitted maps were drawn with Dave's Redistricting Application (DRA 2020), free software that is easy to use and robust enough for our purposes. DRA 2020 had the 2020 Census data before the ARC GIS software did, so the Commission decided to move to DRA 2020. This gave the Commission more time to draw the maps and meet deadlines. DRA 2020 has an export capability that may be useful to move the final maps to the County's official software.

URL to Commissioner Quintanilla's Map:

<https://davesredistricting.org/maps#viewmap::7e8ab84f-3000-4b5a-910f-f9f6d795abac>

URL to League of Women Voters – El Paso Map

<https://davesredistricting.org/maps#viewmap::0426a0f0-848a-43de-b368-5bc71df338f4>

URL to Commissioner Alejandra Chavez' JP Map:

<https://davesredistricting.org/maps#stats::f41bde42-33b0-4864-81f5-8e729ca2abfe>

Special Thanks

First and foremost, special thanks go to County Staff who provided outstanding support and was very responsive to all Commission's requests. Staff includes:

- Ramon Bracamontes
- Rafael Ornelas
- Miguel Mendez
- Ana Schumacher
- Alexis Ortiz
- Jasmin Calderon

Special thanks go to all participants in Public Comments, whose input positively influenced the creation of our final map products. [A list of those who participated is included in Appendix B]

Also, special thanks go to the League of Women Voters – El Paso (LWVEP) for their invaluable input regarding Communities of Interest. Their work brought awareness to the Commission of the importance of not breaking up these communities.

Last, but not least, very special thanks go to each and every one of the Commissioners that served. The spirit of open-mindedness and teamwork permeated throughout the entire process. The Commission accomplished all their goals in the time allotted, proof of their professionalism and dedication.

On a personal note, it has been my pleasure to serve as the Commission's Chair.

Closing Comments

It is the Commission's hope that it has served as a model to follow for election cycles in the future.

The framework that was provided by Commissioners Court in creating this Commission proved to be excellent. The criteria for selecting who can serve resulted in a set of individuals with vast knowledge of our county and an independent-minded, non-partisan behavior. Exactly what the Court envisioned.

The inclusion of Communities of Interest (COI) as criteria for drawing the maps yielded a high-quality end product.

The absence of any pressure by any of the members of Commissioners Court on the Commission was truly appreciated. Once again, just as the Court envisioned.

The Commission is confident that the maps provided to the Court merit their approval.

Appendix A – Meeting Locations

7.22.21 - El Paso County Courthouse 500 E. San Antonio, Room LL 106, El Paso, Texas 79901.

7.29.21 - El Paso County Courthouse 500 E. San Antonio, Room LL 303. El Paso, Texas 79901.

8.12.21 - Texas Tech University Health Science Center, 137 Rick Francis Dr., El Paso, Texas, MEB 1120

8.26.21 - Marty Robbins Park, 11600 Vista Del Sol Dr, El Paso, Texas 79936

9.2.21 - Rogelio Sanchez Center, 1331 N Fabens Rd, Fabens, Texas 79838

9.16.21 - West Valley Fire Station, 510 E. Vinton Road, Vinton, Texas 79821

9.23.21 - El Paso County Human Resources Office, 500 E. Overland Ave, El Paso, Texas 79901

9.30.21 - El Paso County Courthouse, 500 E. San Antonio, Room LL 303. , El Paso, Texas 79901

10.2.21 - El Paso County Courthouse, 500 E. San Antonio, Room 303. El Paso, Texas 79901.

10.12.21 - El Paso County Courthouse, 500 E. San Antonio, Room 303. El Paso, Texas 79901

Appendix B – Public Comment Participants

Noel Rosenbaum, West Side resident	Justices of the Peace:
Sylvia Carreon, Mission Valley Civic Association	Ruben Lujan
Lucilla Najera, Penrose Neighborhood Association	Nina Serna
Debbie Torres, Pueblo Viejo Neighborhood Association	Josh Herrera
Michael Apodaca	Becky Bustamante
George Ybarra	Robert Pearson
Jose Najera	Brian Haggerty
Eileen Martin	Stephanie Fretze
Mya Hernandez	Constables:
Luna Palacios	Oscar Ugarte
Paula Rodriguez	Hector Bernal
Pat White	Luis Aguilar
Judy Ackerman	Manny Lopez