



MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Members of the County Commission
and School Board
Gadsden County, Florida

FROM: Kurt Spitzer

DATE: January 4, 2024

RE: Redistricting Commission Districts

The purpose of this Memorandum is to update the County Commission and School Board on the status of our work to revise the Commission districts based on 2020 Census data.

Redistricting Criteria

Legislative districts (whether those of the Legislature, or a county, city or district) are required to be as nearly equal in population as practicable or possible. Redistricting is the process by which differences in the population of districts are equalized by adjusting district boundaries, and furthers the principle of “one person, one vote.”

The overall objective of a redistricting process should be to adjust the district boundaries so that district populations are roughly equal to one-another, the plans not dilute minority voting strength, and result in district shapes that are relatively compact and are easily understood by the electorate.

There are several criteria commonly used in the redistricting process. They are considered in total and balanced with each other; however, the dominant criterion is equal population using the most recent data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

1. Equal in population. A primary objective is to have the population of individual districts be as nearly equal to one another as is practicable. “Population” refers to residents, not registered voters. “Nearly equal” means that the population of individual districts should be as close to the average or “ideal” size as is possible.

Generally, a goal of having districts that are not more than three percent (3%) over or under the average or ideal district population is a reasonable objective to pursue. Further, districting plans where the difference between the largest and smallest district is greater than 10 percentage points (e.g., the largest district is 7% over the ideal and the smallest is 6% under, or 13 points) raises a “red flag” in the courts.

Within the confines of generally accepted redistricting criteria, accounting for future population growth over the next decennial period may be considered. In other words, one may decide to under-populate a district that is projected to be a high growth area over the next several years, based on sound demographic principles.

The general trend in case law and practice concerning redistricting in Florida local governments with single-member districting plans is to not include or “count” the population of persons incarcerated in state or federal prisons that are located within the jurisdiction. Prison population has not been counted in the Gadsden County redistricting process.

2. Avoid diluting minority voting strength. If there is a location where a considerable number of minority residents reside, their ability to vote as a block should not be diluted by either dividing that population into two or more districts (termed “cracking”) or, if there is a significant minority population in two districts, moving that population into a single district (termed “packing”).
3. Use census block data. Data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census is updated every 10 years by surveying the population of the United States. Census data is presumed to be correct. The smallest unit within which that information is tabulated and made available are census “blocks.”
4. Keep compact and contiguous. Districts should be relatively compact and contiguous. Unusual, “bizarre” or serpentine district shapes that are created without furthering a valid underlying public policy purpose must be avoided. “Contiguity” may be achieved by crossing a waterbody.
5. Follow significant natural and man-made boundaries. District boundaries should follow easily recognized or understood boundaries, like major roads, waterbodies or parklands.
6. Recognize existing district boundaries. The boundaries of the updated districts may seek to retain their existing district’s shape and boundaries to the extent possible.
7. Avoid splitting communities of interest. District boundaries should seek to avoid splitting communities that have similar interests (e.g., neighborhoods or cities) where possible.

Existing Districts Map

The first step in the redistricting process is to determine if there is a need to adjust district boundaries because of a significant imbalance between district populations. This is accomplished by “layering” or applying the 2020 census block data to the district boundaries as they currently exist, and then tabulating the underlying data.

A copy of the Existing Districts Maps using 2020 data is attached, as is a table of statistical information for the existing district boundaries. Using the existing district boundaries and 2020 Census block data indicates that adjustments to district boundaries are necessary as the difference or spread between the largest and smallest district is over 46 percentage points and well beyond the generally acceptable tolerance of 10 points. Differences in population between one district and another can be equalized by adjusting the boundaries of the districts, while following the common redistricting criteria (described above) to the extent possible.

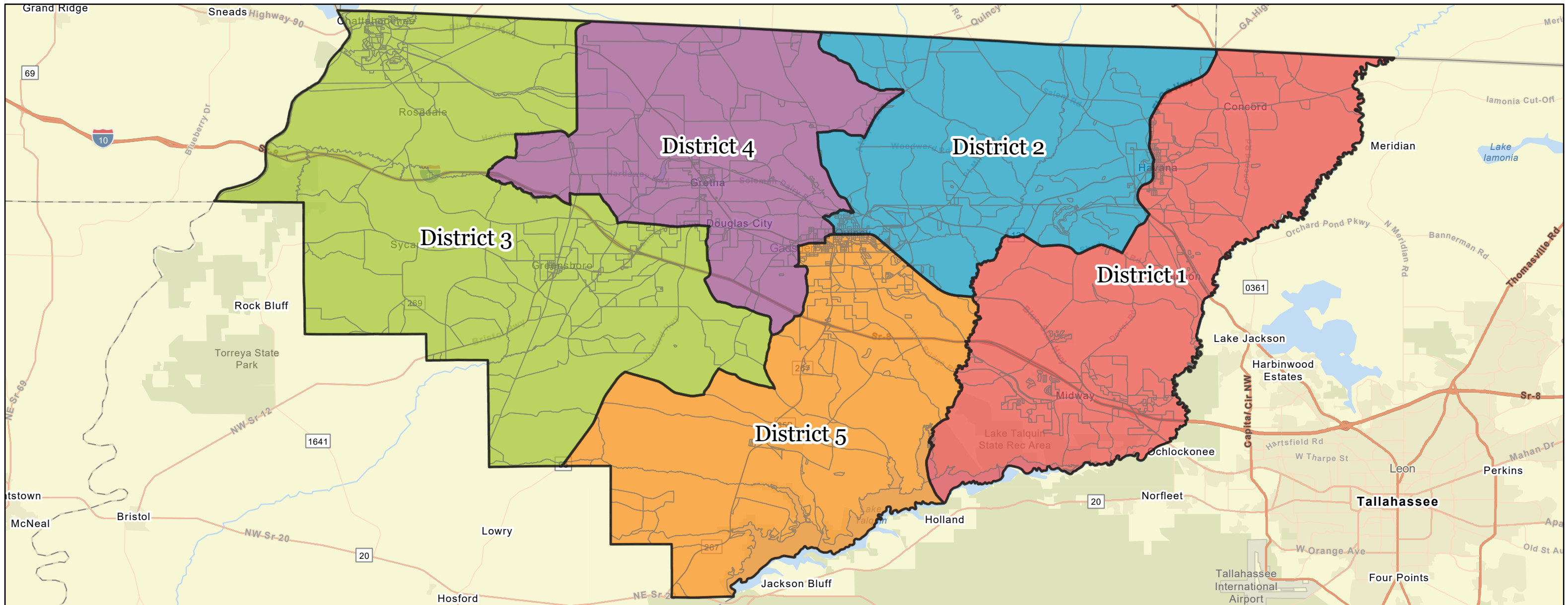
We appreciate the opportunity to work with the County Commission and School District. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Attachments

**Gadsden County Redistricting
Current Districts**

| Current Districts | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| spread = 46.79 points | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DISTRICT | 2020 Population IDEAL | 2020 Population ACTUAL | Population Deviation | Percent Deviation | Population White | Percent White | Population Black | Percent Black | Population Other | Percent Other | Population Hispanic | Percent Hispanic |
| District 1 | 8,587.60 | 11,156 | 2,568 | 29.91% | 3,886 | 34.8% | 6,574 | 58.9% | 696 | 6.2% | 631 | 5.7% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 8,695 | | | 3,343 | 38.4% | 4,886 | 56.2% | 466 | 5.4% | 389 | 4.5% |
| District 2 | 8,587.60 | 8,544 | (44) | -0.51% | 4,155 | 48.6% | 3,411 | 39.9% | 978 | 11.4% | 910 | 10.7% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 7,046 | | | 3,668 | 52.1% | 2,671 | 37.9% | 707 | 10.0% | 614 | 8.7% |
| District 3 | 8,587.60 | 7,597 | (991) | -11.54% | 3,357 | 44.2% | 3,161 | 41.6% | 1,079 | 14.2% | 1,158 | 15.2% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 6,180 | | | 2,957 | 47.8% | 2,477 | 40.1% | 746 | 12.1% | 790 | 12.8% |
| District 4 | 8,587.60 | 7,138 | (1,450) | -16.88% | 1,140 | 16.0% | 4,818 | 67.5% | 1,180 | 16.5% | 1,262 | 17.7% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 5,380 | | | 969 | 18.0% | 3,637 | 67.6% | 774 | 14.4% | 827 | 15.4% |
| District 5 | 8,587.60 | 8,503 | (85) | -0.99% | 2,015 | 23.7% | 5,515 | 64.9% | 973 | 11.4% | 1,067 | 12.5% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 6,428 | | | 1,711 | 26.6% | 4,063 | 63.2% | 654 | 10.2% | 678 | 10.5% |
| Totals | 42,938 | 42,938 | | | 14,553 | | 23,479 | | 4,906 | | 5,028 | |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 33,729 | | | 12,648 | | 17,734 | | 3,347 | | 3,298 | |

Gadsden County Commission Districts 2020 Redistricting Data



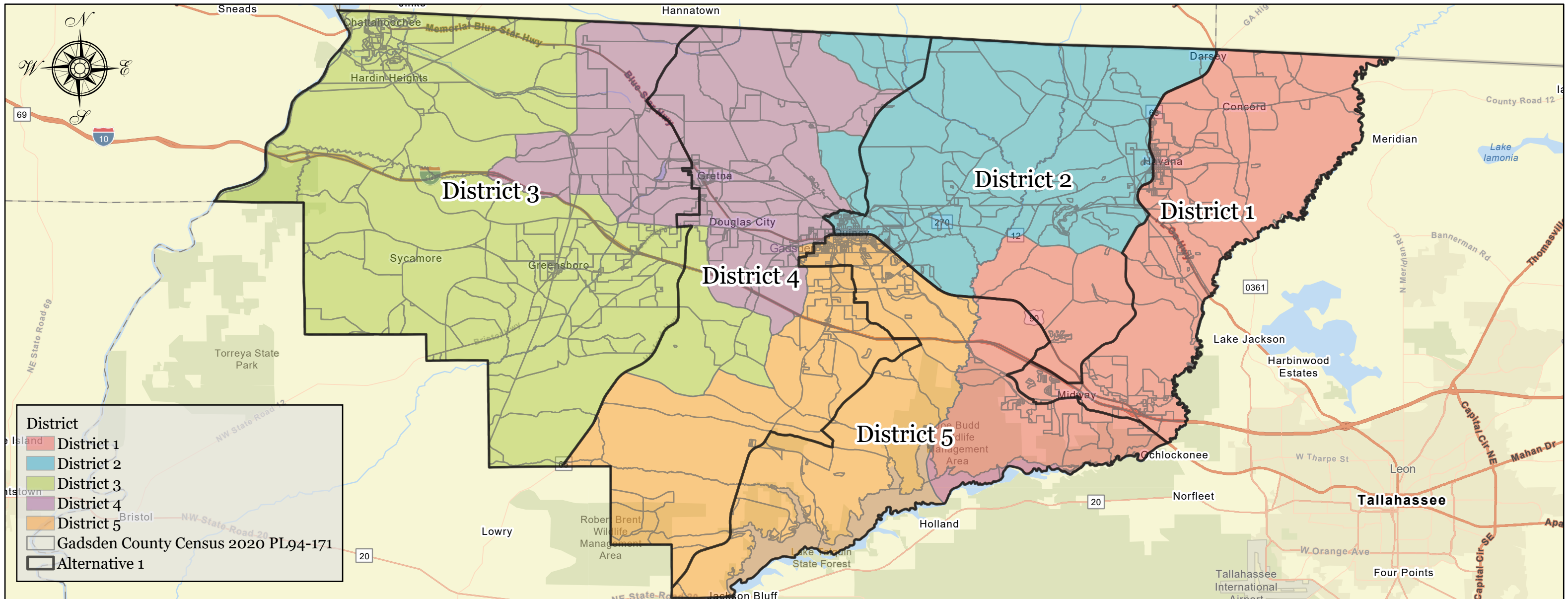
| DISTRICT | 2020 Population IDEAL | 2020 Population ACTUAL | Population Deviation | Percent Deviation | Population White | Percent White | Population Black | Percent Black | Population Other | Percent Other | Population Hispanic | Percent Hispanic |
|---------------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|
| District 1 | 8,587.60 | 11156 | 2568.40 | 29.9% | 3886 | 35% | 6574 | 59% | 696 | 6% | 631 | 6% |
| District 2 | 8,587.60 | 8544 | -43.60 | -0.5% | 4155 | 49% | 3411 | 40% | 978 | 11% | 910 | 11% |
| District 3 | 8,587.60 | 7597 | -990.60 | -11.5% | 3357 | 44% | 3161 | 42% | 1079 | 14% | 1158 | 15% |
| District 4 | 8,587.60 | 7138 | -1449.60 | -16.9% | 1140 | 16% | 4818 | 67% | 1180 | 17% | 1262 | 18% |
| District 5 | 8,587.60 | 8503 | -84.60 | -1.0% | 2015 | 24% | 5515 | 65% | 973 | 11% | 1067 | 13% |
| Totals | 42,938 | 42938 | 0 | 0 | 14553 | - | 23479 | - | 4906 | - | 5028 | - |

**Gadsden County Redistricting
Draft Alternative Options**

| Alternative 1 <i>spread = 9.2 points</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| DISTRICT | 2020 Population IDEAL | 2020 Population ACTUAL | Population Deviation | Percent Deviation | Population White | Percent White | Population Black | Percent Black | Population Other | Percent Other | Population Hispanic | Percent Hispanic |
| District 1 | 8,587.60 | 8,855 | 267 | 3.11% | 3,302 | 37.3% | 5,034 | 56.8% | 519 | 5.9% | 489 | 5.5% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 6,963 | | | 2,833 | 40.7% | 3,783 | 54.3% | 347 | 5.0% | 302 | 4.3% |
| District 2 | 8,587.60 | 8,934 | 346 | 4.03% | 4,531 | 50.7% | 3,428 | 38.4% | 975 | 10.9% | 881 | 9.9% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 7,403 | | | 4,010 | 54.2% | 2,686 | 36.3% | 707 | 9.6% | 589 | 8.0% |
| District 3 | 8,587.60 | 8,144 | (444) | -5.17% | 3,541 | 43.5% | 3,440 | 42.2% | 1,163 | 14.3% | 1,233 | 15.1% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 6,600 | | | 3,107 | 47.1% | 2,680 | 40.6% | 813 | 12.3% | 848 | 12.8% |
| District 4 | 8,587.60 | 8,213 | (375) | -4.36% | 1,506 | 18.3% | 5,406 | 65.8% | 1,301 | 15.8% | 1,408 | 17.1% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 6,204 | | | 1,270 | 20.5% | 4,077 | 65.7% | 857 | 13.8% | 919 | 14.8% |
| District 5 | 8,587.60 | 8,792 | 204 | 2.38% | 1,673 | 19.0% | 6,171 | 70.2% | 948 | 10.8% | 1,017 | 11.6% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 6,559 | | | 1,428 | 21.8% | 4,508 | 68.7% | 623 | 9.5% | 640 | 9.8% |
| Totals | 42,938 | 42,938 | | | 14,553 | | 23,479 | | 4,906 | | 5,028 | |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 33,729 | | | 12,648 | | 17,734 | | 3,347 | | 3,298 | |

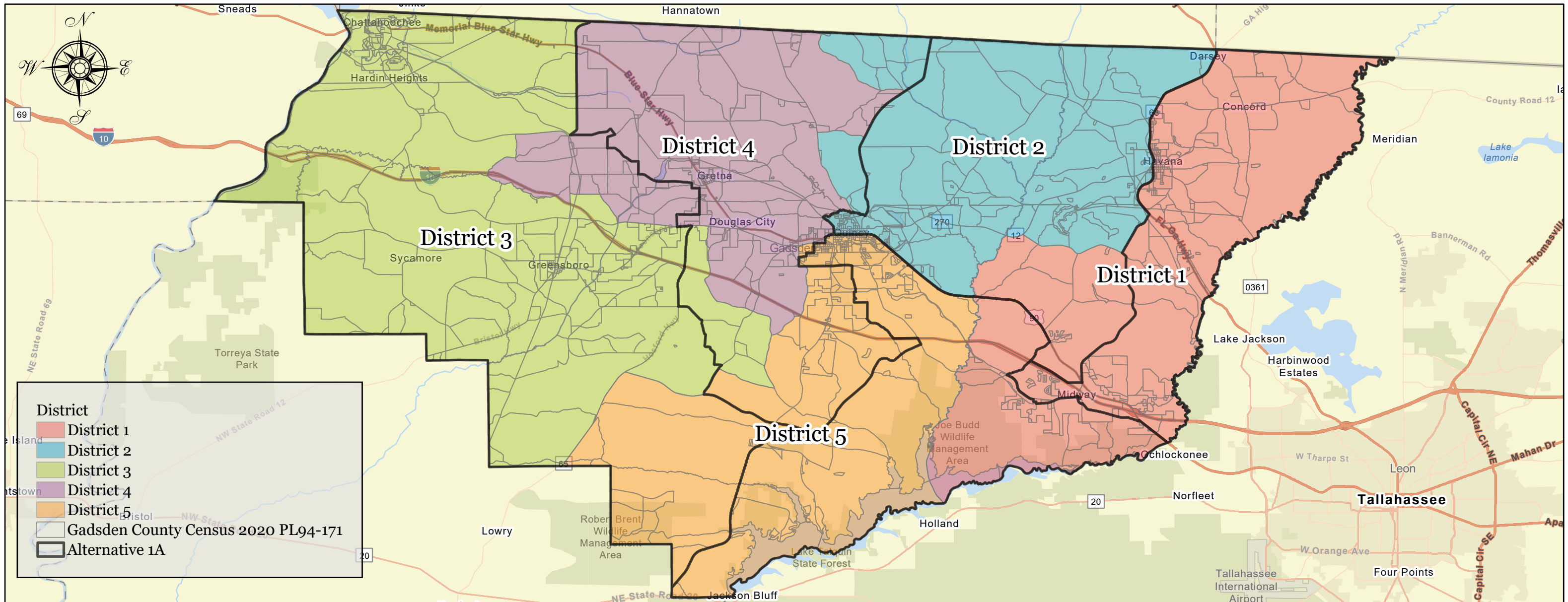
| Alternative 1A <i>spread = 9.51 points</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| DISTRICT | 2020 Population IDEAL | 2020 Population ACTUAL | Population Deviation | Percent Deviation | Population White | Percent White | Population Black | Percent Black | Population Other | Percent Other | Population Hispanic | Percent Hispanic |
| District 1 | 8,587.60 | 8,855 | 267 | 3.11% | 3,302 | 37.3% | 5,034 | 56.8% | 519 | 5.9% | 489 | 5.5% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 6,963 | | | 2,833 | 40.7% | 3,783 | 54.3% | 347 | 5.0% | 302 | 4.3% |
| District 2 | 8,587.60 | 8,934 | 346 | 4.03% | 4,531 | 50.7% | 3,428 | 38.4% | 975 | 10.9% | 881 | 9.9% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 7,403 | | | 4,010 | 54.2% | 2,686 | 36.3% | 707 | 9.6% | 589 | 8.0% |
| District 3 | 8,587.60 | 8,117 | (471) | -5.48% | 3,670 | 45.2% | 3,338 | 41.1% | 1,109 | 13.7% | 1,187 | 14.6% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 6,589 | | | 3,207 | 48.7% | 2,610 | 39.6% | 772 | 11.7% | 806 | 12.2% |
| District 4 | 8,587.60 | 8,200 | (388) | -4.51% | 1,343 | 16.4% | 5,505 | 67.1% | 1,352 | 16.5% | 1,449 | 17.7% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 6,183 | | | 1,141 | 18.5% | 4,147 | 67.1% | 895 | 14.5% | 958 | 15.5% |
| District 5 | 8,587.60 | 8,832 | 244 | 2.85% | 1,707 | 19.3% | 6,174 | 69.9% | 951 | 10.8% | 1,022 | 11.6% |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 6,591 | | | 1,457 | 22.1% | 4,508 | 68.4% | 626 | 9.5% | 643 | 9.8% |
| Totals | 42,938 | 42,938 | | | 14,553 | | 23,479 | | 4,906 | | 5,028 | |
| <i>Voting Age Population</i> | | 33,729 | | | 12,648 | | 17,734 | | 3,347 | | 3,298 | |

Alternative 1 Gadsden County Districts



| DISTRICT | 2020 Population IDEAL | 2020 Population ACTUAL | Population Deviation | Percent Deviation | Population White | Percent White | Population Black | Percent Black | Population Other | Percent Other | Population Hispanic | Percent Hispanic |
|---------------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|
| District 1 | 8,587.60 | 8855 | 267.40 | 3.1% | 3302 | 37% | 5034 | 57% | 519 | 6% | 489 | 6% |
| District 2 | 8,587.60 | 8934 | 346.40 | 4.0% | 4531 | 51% | 3428 | 38% | 975 | 11% | 881 | 10% |
| District 3 | 8,587.60 | 8144 | -443.60 | -5.2% | 3541 | 43% | 3440 | 42% | 1163 | 14% | 1233 | 15% |
| District 4 | 8,587.60 | 8213 | -374.60 | -4.4% | 1506 | 18% | 5406 | 66% | 1301 | 16% | 1408 | 17% |
| District 5 | 8,587.60 | 8792 | 204.40 | 2.4% | 1673 | 19% | 6171 | 70% | 948 | 11% | 1017 | 12% |
| Totals | 42,938 | 42938 | 0 | 0 | 14553 | - | 23479 | - | 4906 | - | 5028 | - |

Alternative 1A Gadsden County Districts



| DISTRICT | 2020 Population IDEAL | 2020 Population ACTUAL | Population Deviation | Percent Deviation | Population White | Percent White | Population Black | Percent Black | Population Other | Percent Other | Population Hispanic | Percent Hispanic |
|---------------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|
| District 1 | 8,587.60 | 8855 | 267.40 | 3.1% | 3302 | 37% | 5034 | 57% | 519 | 6% | 489 | 6% |
| District 2 | 8,587.60 | 8934 | 346.40 | 4.0% | 4531 | 51% | 3428 | 38% | 975 | 11% | 881 | 10% |
| District 3 | 8,587.60 | 8117 | -470.60 | -5.5% | 3670 | 45% | 3338 | 41% | 1109 | 14% | 1187 | 15% |
| District 4 | 8,587.60 | 8200 | -387.60 | -4.5% | 1343 | 16% | 5505 | 67% | 1352 | 16% | 1449 | 18% |
| District 5 | 8,587.60 | 8832 | 244.40 | 2.8% | 1707 | 19% | 6174 | 70% | 951 | 11% | 1022 | 12% |
| Totals | 42,938 | 42938 | 0 | 0 | 14553 | - | 23479 | - | 4906 | - | 5028 | - |