Redistricting:
Navigating the Future and
An Outline of the Process

August 26, 2021

What is Redistricting?

Simply stated, redistricting is the process of redrawing electoral boundaries.

In **times past**, many electoral districts were defined by the borders of towns, counties, or similar geographies.

In the mid 1960's, the Supreme Court required that legislative districts have roughly equal population.

Maintaining this "equal population" = redistricting

Baker v. Carr (1962) – Tennessee forced to redraw uneven districts.
Gray v. Sanders (1963) – Requires "one person, one vote" standard in State elections.
Reynolds v. Sims (1964) – All state legislative districts must have ~ equal populations.
Wesberry v. Sanders (1964) – Members of US House must represent the same # of people.

The three types of redistricting…
Federal (U.S. House of Representatives)

Maryland's congressional lines are drawn by the state legislature, as a regular statute, subject to gubernatorial veto.

MD will have the same # of US Reps (8) in 2020. No loss or gain.

State General Assembly (Senators and Delegates)

Maryland 2012 Legislative Districts
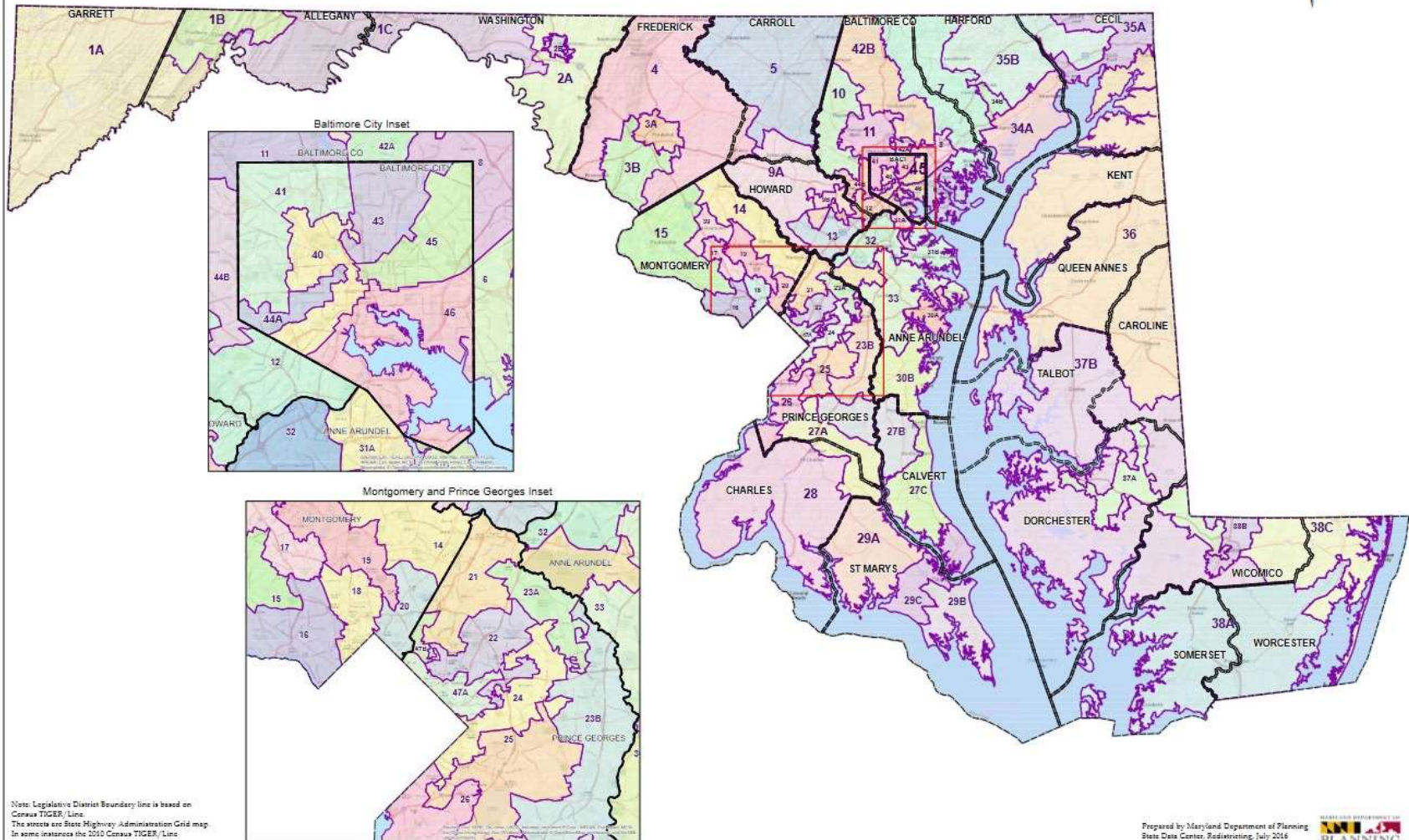Senate Districts
SJR1/HJR1
February 24, 2012
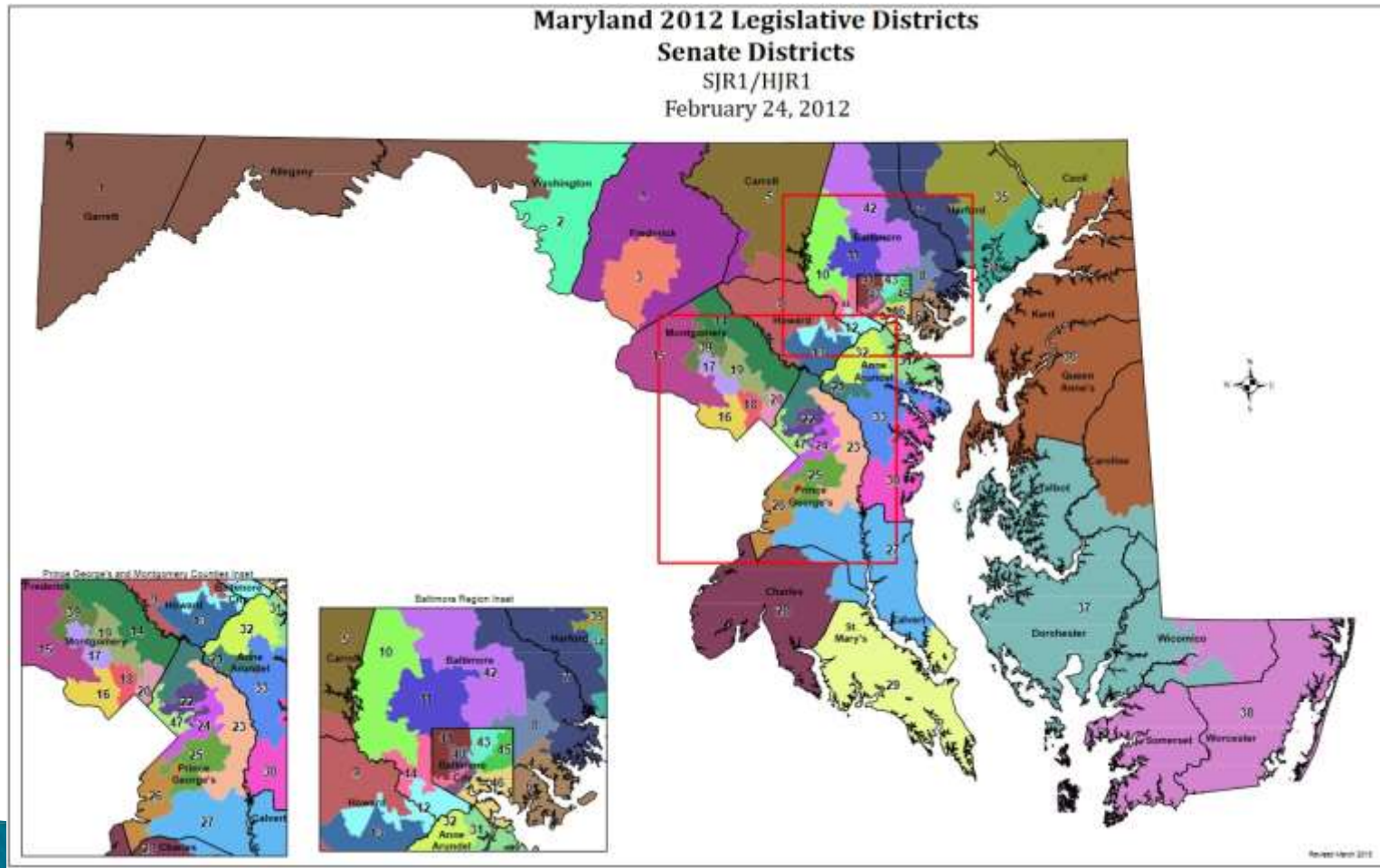
For state legislative lines, the Governor submits a proposed plan at the start of the legislative session.

If the state legislature does not pass a joint resolution to redraw state legislative lines within 45 days, the Governor's plan becomes law.

Maps of the State Senate and House of Delegates districts are available at:
https://planning.maryland.gov/Redistricting/Pages/2010/legiDist.aspx

How did redistricting at the State level proceed ten years ago?

Federal

In the 2010 cycle, the MD General Assembly passed a congressional plan (SB 1) on October 20, 2011. (http://mlis.state.md.us/2011s1/billfile/SB0001.htm)

It was signed into law by the Governor the same day.

A referendum (Question 05) about the congressional plan was placed on the November 2012 ballot. The referendum was defeated, and the maps were adopted.

State

on January 11, 2012, the Governor released state Senate (SJR 1) and state House (HJR 1) plans.
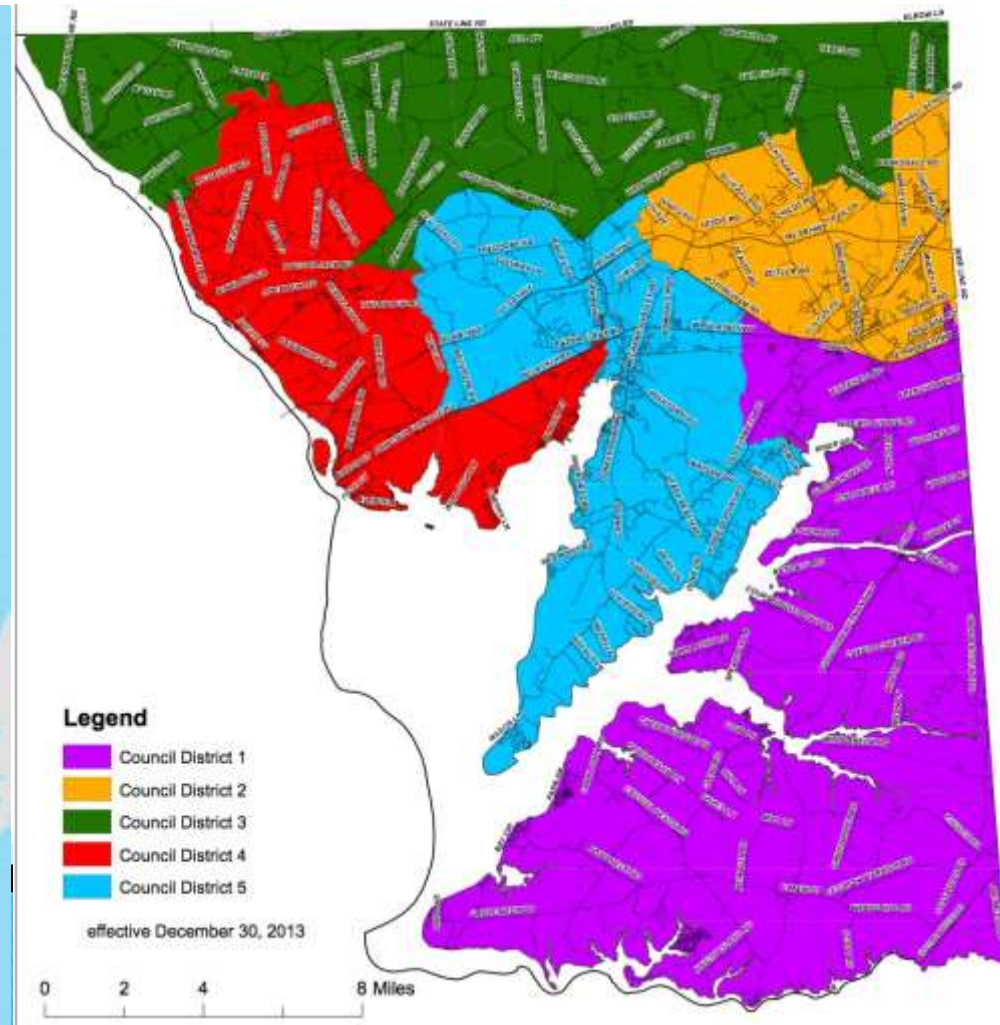
Without legislative action in the next 45 days, the Governor's proposal became law on Feb. 24, 2012. (*see Article III, Section 5 of the Maryland Constitution*)

http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/search/legislation?target=/2012rs/billfile/sj0001.htm

http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/search/legislation?target=/2012rs/billfile/hj0001.htm

The third type of redistricting…
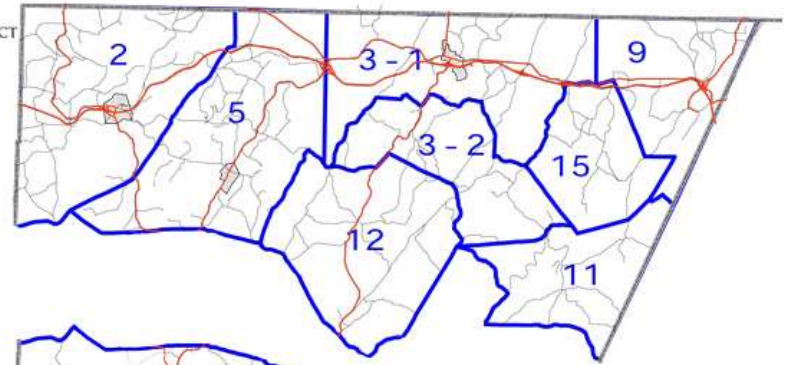## County level councilmanic/commissioner districts!

Cecil County

**Most of us will be working with redistricting on this,
the most local level.**

What are we waiting for? Let's get started!

Well…

The pandemic has delayed release of the smaller level geography population data required for County level redistricting.

According to the latest from the Census Bureau…

The redistricting data will include:

- Housing unit counts
- Occupancy status for housing units (occupied or vacant)
- Population totals
- Population totals by race
- Population totals by race and Hispanic/Latino origin
- Voting-age population (age 18 and older) totals by race and Hispanic/Latino origin
- Population totals in group quarters by major group quarters type

We will release these data for all 50 states, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. Within each, we will provide data for multiple geographies, such as:

- Counties
- Townships
- Cities
- Voting districts
- School districts
- Tracts
- Census blocks

Data Timeline

- August 16, 2021 (as reported by the Census Bureau)
  - First look at statewide demographic characteristics – Legacy release
    - Race and ethnicity
    - Voting age population
    - Occupied and vacant housing units
    - People living in group quarters (nursing homes, prison, mil. barracks, college dorms, etc.)

- September 30, 2021 (as reported by the Census Bureau)
  - Census data released in new format – Official Release
    - Governor, Legislative leaders and redistricting commissions
  - Release includes tools for using and analyzing census data

- January 12, 2022 to April 11, 2022 – Legislative Session
  - Governor submits proposed plan to legislature
  - If Legislature does not pass joint resolution to redraw state legislative lines within 45 days, the Governor's plan becomes law
  - 45th day is February 26, 2022

But wait, there's more processing needed…

House Bill 496 and Senate Bill 400 (from the 2010 General Assembly session) require that:

•The census data be adjusted to "have incarcerated individuals reallocated to their last known address."

•The Maryland Department of Planning complete this process.

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING

MDP estimates that it may take 30 additional days to complete this. So, if the current estimates hold, we'll have the data we need sometime around October 30, 2021.

Yikes! What does this mean for our timelines?

214 Redistricting.

(a) The Council shall appoint by resolution a Redistricting Commission not later than April 1 of the year following each decennial census date. The central committee of each political party polling at least 25% of the total vote cast for the Executive at the last preceding general election shall nominate five persons to serve on the Commission. Each such list shall include one person who resides in each residency district. The Council shall appoint all such nominees as members of the Commission as well as one or two additional members of the Commission, as the case may be, to ensure that its total membership equals an odd number. The Council shall appoint the Chair of the Commission from among the Commission members. No person shall be eligible for appointment to the Commission who holds elective office.

(b) By November 15 of the year before the year in which redistricting is to take effect, the Commission shall present to the Council a plan of residency districts, together with a report explaining it. Within 30 days of receiving the plan of the Commission, the Council shall hold a public hearing on the plan. If within 90 days after submission of the plan no other legislation reestablishing the boundaries of the residency districts has been enacted, the plan as submitted shall become law.

(c) Any residency district established in accordance with this section shall be compact, contiguous, substantially equal in population, and have common interests as a result of geography, occupation, history, or existing political boundaries.

(d) An ordinance establishing residency districts shall be exempt from referendum.

Check your County Code or County Charter!

Cecil County's charter (for example) requires the process to be complete "*by November 15 of the year before the year in which the redistricting is to take effect.*"

What can we do while we wait?

- Familiarize yourself with relevant portions of your County's code or charter;

- Start the appointment/nominating process for your local redistricting commission;
  (You'll want them ready to go ASAP!)

- *Decide how you want results presented to decision makers and the public.*
  (i.e. As a pdf map? An interactive web map?)

Such as…

GeoCortex – GIS App

- Maintained by Anne Arundel County OIT-GIS
- View and compare political district boundaries
- Drill down to more detailed views of streets, address points, features used to landmark district boundaries, etc.

What else?

- *Reach out to your local GIS Coordinator*
  - ◦ Do you already partner with them for mapping projects?

  - ◦ Provide a Statement of Work / Overview of Redistricting requirements.

  - ◦ Discuss tasks they can help you begin now, like street file clean-up.

- *Familiarize yourself with the basics of GIS*
  - ◦ Turning on/off layers, uploading data, searching for street ranges, adding drawings and markings to the map, etc.

Street File Cleanup

- Review MDVOTERS street file records for accuracy, and make updates as necessary;

- Compare the MDVOTERS street file export against another database (GIS) as well as precinct maps;

- Review every precinct for street name and range accuracy.
  - Street ranges can be split across multiple precincts (e.g. even/odd split).
  - Pre direction, street name, street type, post direction are checked for accuracy.
 - Verify precinct and districts are correctly assigned.

Boundary Review and Cleanup

- ## Districts and Precincts Cleanup
    - Review your Districts, Precincts and Splits in MDVOTERS and hide unused entries

- ## District Boundary Review
    - A process in which LBEs review District/Precinct maps on file with the Department of Planning against their own precinct maps and legal descriptions.
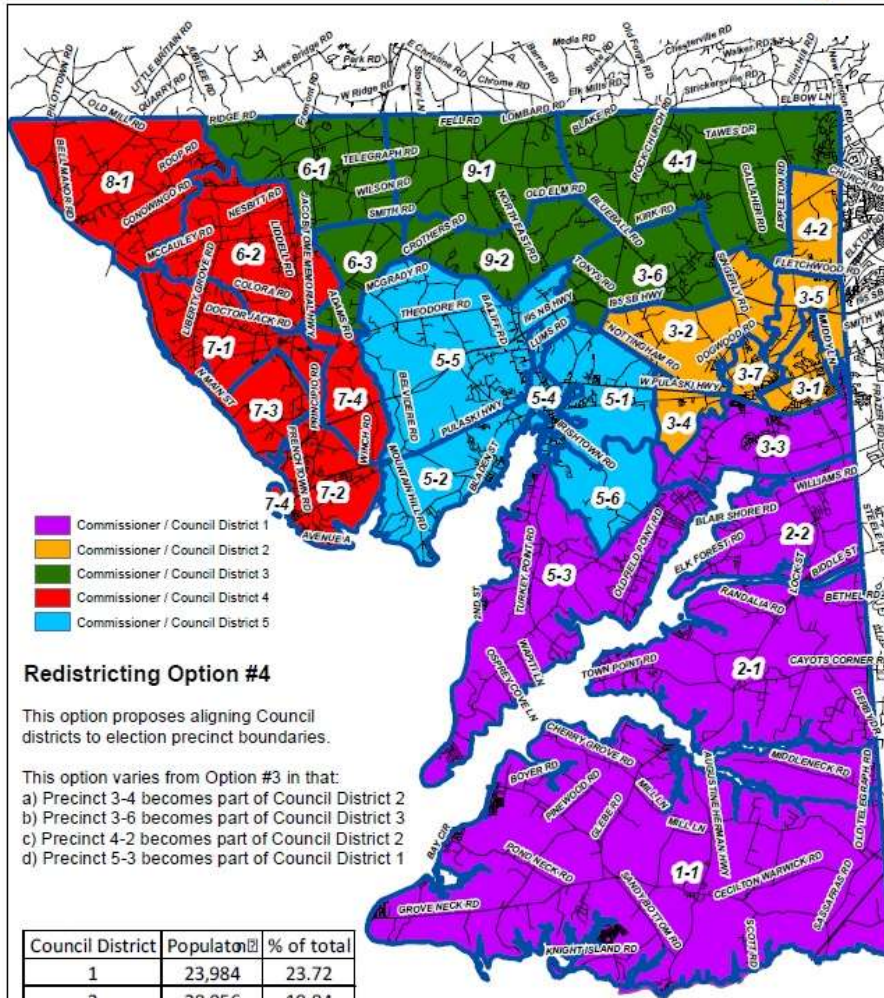
Once we have the population data, and once the commission is in place, what happens next?

- Get ready for a lot of meetings;

- Public comment;

- Many iterations of maps;

- And discussions with decision makers!
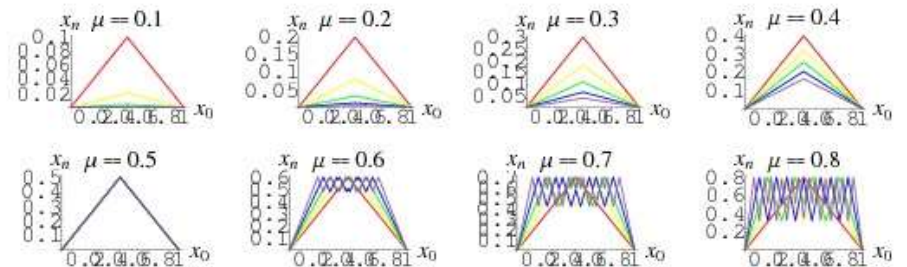
County Council Districts - Redistricting Option #4 ("DDC")
Alignment of Council Districts to Precinct Boundaries

Redistricting Option #4

This option proposes aligning Council districts to election precinct boundaries.

This option varies from Option #3 in that:
a) Precinct 3-4 becomes part of Council District 2
b) Precinct 3-6 becomes part of Council District 3
c) Precinct 4-2 becomes part of Council District 2
d) Precinct 5-3 becomes part of Council District 1

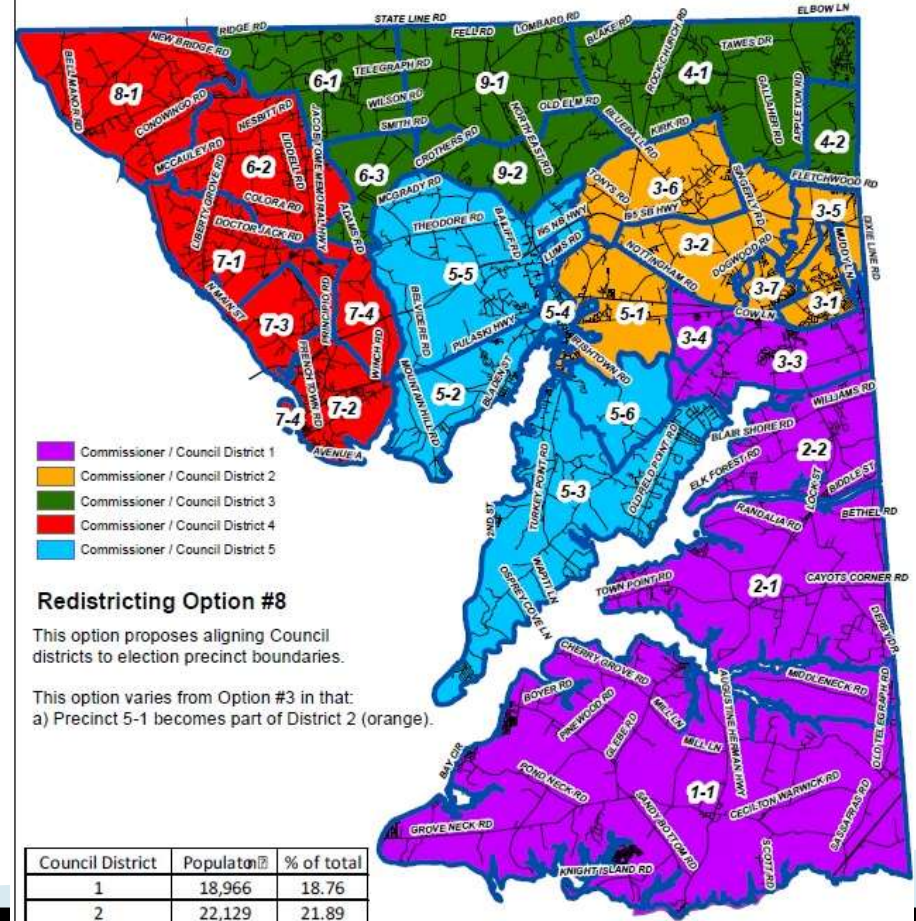| Council District	Population	% of total
1	23,984	23.72
2	20,056	19.84
3	20,092	19.87
4	20,192	19.97
5	16,784	16.60
Total	101,108	

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 population data, disaggregated by census block groups.

June 25, 2013

**County Council Districts - Redistricting Option #8 (GC)**

Redistricting Option #8

This option proposes aligning Council districts to election precinct boundaries.

This option varies from Option #3 in that:
a) Precinct 5-1 becomes part of District 2 (orange).

Council District	Population	% of total
1	18,966	18.76
2	22,129	21.89
3	20,419	20.20
4	20,192	19.97
5	19,402	19.19
Total	101,108	

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 population data, disaggregated by census block groups.

July 23, 2013
as proposed by Ms. Gerry Carpenter

Legend (both maps):
- Commissioner / Council District 1
- Commissioner / Council District 2
- Commissioner / Council District 3
- Commissioner / Council District 4
- Commissioner / Council District 5

Cecil County went through _eight_ map iterations (over the course of two months) during the last redistricting process!

What about the two state level redistricting commissions somebody told me about?

MARYLAND
CITIZENS
REDISTRICTING
COMMISSION
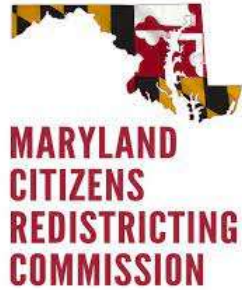
- This Commission is "charged with revising the congressional and legislative district lines in a fair and impartial manner."

- Created by gubernatorial executive order.

- Composed of nine citizens: three registered Democrats, three registered Republicans, and three registered Non-Affiliated voters.

- Conducted "virtual listening tour" to solicit public comment (other activity planned after Census data released).

- **Ultimate result =** producing fair maps for both state legislative and congressional districts that comply with a set of criteria, including:

1) Complies with U.S. Constitution and Voting Rights Act of 1965;
2) Respects natural boundaries and geographic integrity; and
3) Does not take into account citizens' party affiliation.

And the second commission is the...
## Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission

- Has a similar charge as the MD Citizens Redistricting Commission;

- Created by leaders in the General Assembly;

- Composed of seven members: 6 members of the General Assembly and former director of Dept. of Legislative Services

- Will hold town hall meetings throughout the State;

- **Ultimate result =** "to serve as the General Assembly's vehicle to hear from Marylanders in a bipartisan and transparent manner before proposing maps"

Remember…Maryland law allows the governor to submit the first draft of redistricting maps, but the General Assembly is free to modify those maps or entirely replace them with a new version(s).

Why you might want to wait to begin County level efforts until the State level efforts are done…

- Splitting local precincts between two different Delegate districts is a great way to cause confusion.

- Many local redistricting efforts value congruency with the "higher level" districts.

- At the end of every local redistricting process, written descriptions (like deed descriptions for property) must be created.
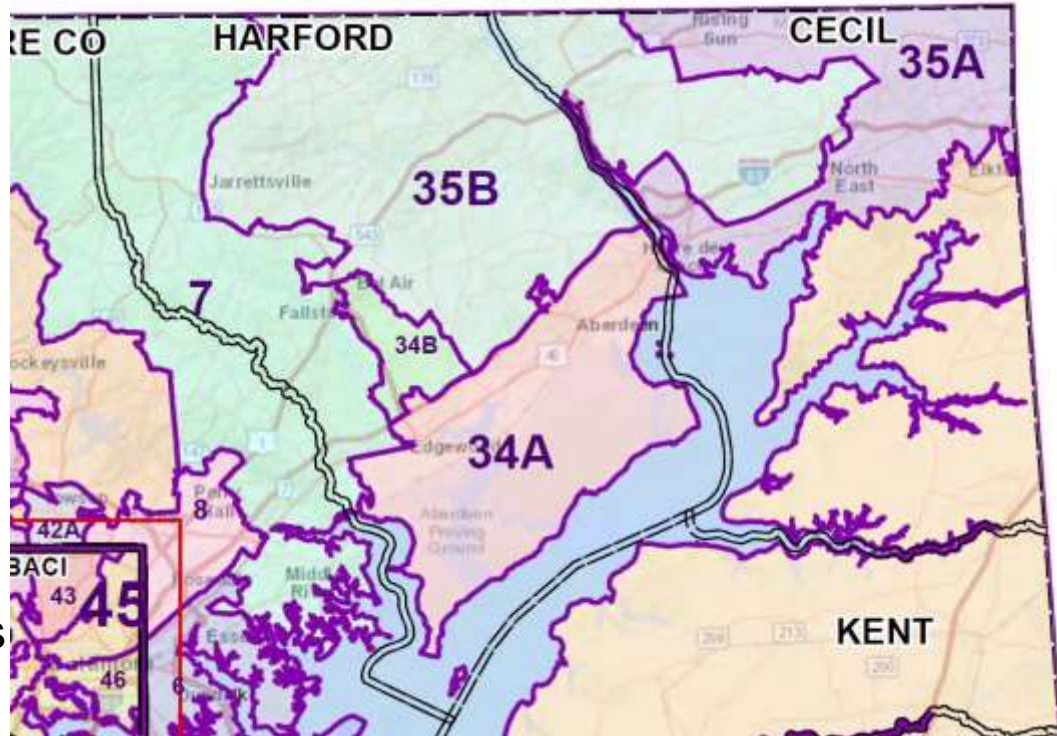
- Using phrases like "following the western boundary of District 35A" is a nice way to simplify these written descriptions.

# What is the State Board of Elections doing to support the entire process?

MDVOTERS Teams

- Voter Registration
  - Assist LBE's with street file, district and precinct questions during redistricting process;
  - Continuously evaluating MDVOTERS performance and recommending enhancements;
  - Field support for MDVOTERS software functionality and enhancement requests;
  - Preparing refresher and how-to training sessions.

- Candidacy
  - Continual evaluation of candidacy filing and contest processes;
  - Field support for MDVOTERS software functionality;
  - Developing processes for moving effected candidates to new districts;
  - Evaluating how candidate information is released to the public.

MDVOTERS Help

- Service Desk –
  https://sbe.atlassian.net/servicedesk/customer/portal/1
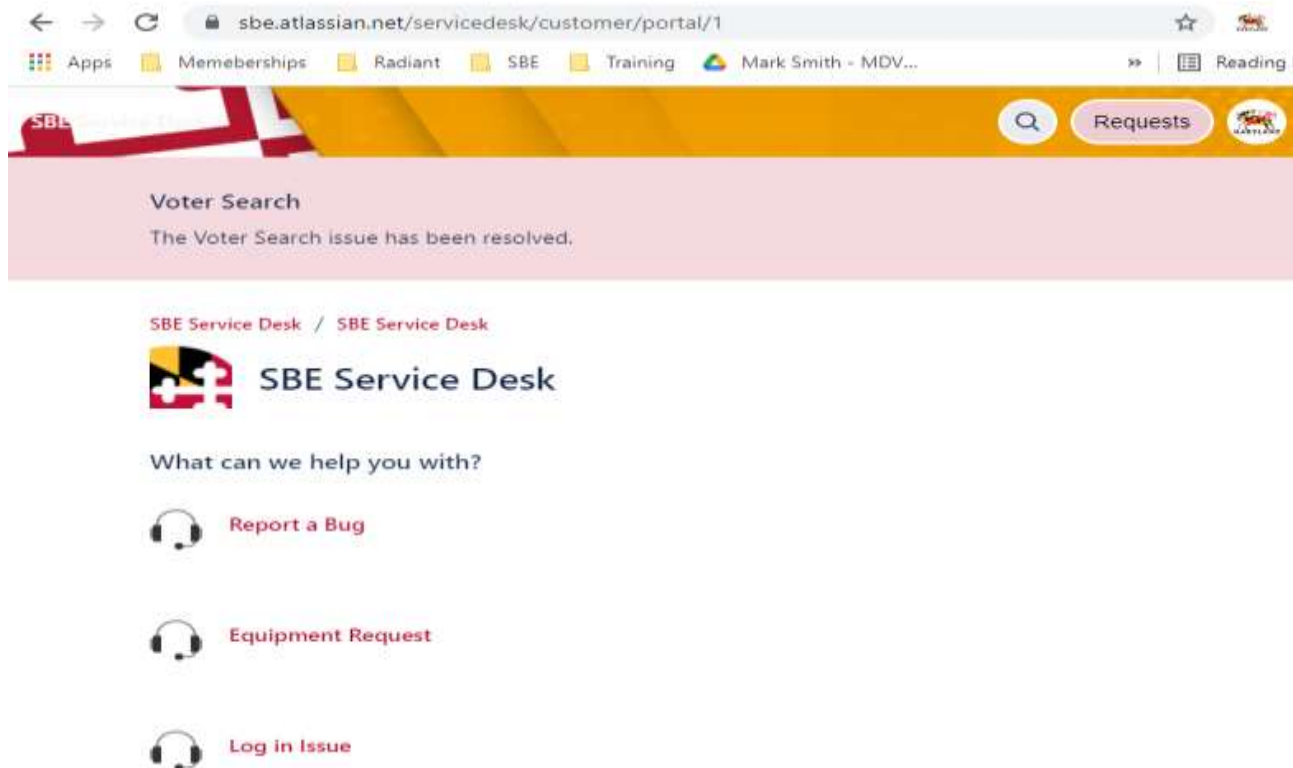
MDVOTERS Software Development

- **Tier I**
  - Tracks service desk requests
  - Assigns service desk tickets to Business Queue
    - SBE teams monitor business Queue
  - LBE's can actively track status of their tickets

- **Tier II**
  - Actively respond to service desk issues
  - Continuous assessment of requested MDVOTERS enhancements
    - Development is tested for Quality Assurance and User Acceptance prior to release
  - Able to communicate directly with SBE and LBE service desk reporters for resolution

- **Database Design**
  - Introduce database components based on additional software enhancements
  - Designing process to save multiple data versions based on redistricting information
  - Working with SBE to design commit process for redistricting data

Questions? Comments?

David R. Black, GIS Coordinator, Cecil County Govt, dblack@ccgov.org

Guy Mickley, Director, Howard County BoE, guy.mickley@maryland.gov

Daniel Oltman, Polling Place Manager, Anne Arundel County Govt., daniel.oltman@maryland.gov

Mark Smith, State Board of Elections, mark.smith1@maryland.gov