



Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

January 29, 2021

Dear State and Local CCC Chairs,

With the legislative session underway, I wanted to share some information with you on the status of our successful 2020 Census and subsequent redistricting process.

We've received a few inquiries as to the timeline with regard to the release of Census data by the U.S. Census Bureau (USCB). On Wednesday, the USCB announced during a [webinar](#) that the current scheduled date for the release of apportionment data for state population counts is now "by April 30th." Further, they indicated that the detailed demographic data used for redistricting would not be available anytime prior to July 30th, but would not provide an estimated date. Based on the delay of previous scheduled release dates, this is, of course, subject to change.

Due to this fact, there is currently no set timeline for when the redistricting process itself can begin. Please also note that once the data is received from the USCB it must be adjusted in compliance with Maryland law to have incarcerated individuals reallocated to their last known address prior to incarceration. We are prepared to have that process begin as soon as the data is received.

Recently, Governor Hogan [established](#) the independent Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission. More information about the Commission and redistricting can be found at redistricting.maryland.gov. Planning will provide a supportive role and plans to assist the Commission as requested. The nine-member Commission is tasked with drafting and recommending congressional and legislative districts once adjusted data is finalized. There will be a process during which public hearings and the ability for map submission by the public will take place. The Commission will update their [website](#) accordingly, and I encourage you to utilize their site for redistricting information moving forward.

As you may know, redistricting is required by state and federal law for congressional districts and legislative districts (House and Senate). This is accomplished at the state level and while different states have different mechanisms to accomplish this process, Maryland will utilize an independent Commission with the goal of providing districts based on a nonpartisan approach.

Election precincts will be adjusted based on the new Census geographies (tracts and blocks) based on USCB's new count and dispersion of the population. Precincts are generally up to the local election board to adjust after everything else is complete. Planning is capable of supplying some assistance as to data, but only when requested and only after district lines are finalized at the state and local level.

With regard to local redistricting, including councilmanic, ward and commissioner districts, the process is typically governed by local law or charter. This is usually accomplished by a local

commission and submitted to the specific governing body for approval. For school districts, the school attendance areas are established and revised by the local school boards.

I hope this answers some questions you may have and provides you a baseline for moving forward as the redistricting process progresses. Again, I highly suggest using the Commission's [website](#), as your primary resource for information.

I thank you once again for all of your efforts to achieve a successful Census count. Your concern for your communities was evident throughout the state. I hope that you are continuing to find ways to help your communities through these days where an end to the pandemic is coming into sight.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert S. McCord". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Robert S. McCord, Esq.
Secretary