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2011 Professional Practices

“Mapping Democracy” through Partnerships

Montgomery County, Maryland

Submitted by:

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“Mapping Democracy”
Through Partnerships

Presently, maps are created by the Montgomery County (MC), Maryland Board of Elections (BOE) in collaboration with the County’s, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), agency to indicate the jurisdictional boundaries; and in addition, using both graphics and aerial data, maps are produced depicting the placement of No Electioneering limits; accessible parking and poll entrances; voter entrances and exits to polling areas; internal layout and set-up of polling facilities including locations of voting equipment, telecommunication connections and storage; and external locations of gathering places for election judges and others in case of emergencies such as fire or bomb threats.

In Montgomery County, creating maps of redistricted jurisdictional boundaries is currently a primary focus as it is for many election professionals throughout the United States. Layers of Congressional, legislative, council and school board district lines with 243 precinct boundaries must be integrated into concise, functional maps well in advance of elections. To meet the need for mapping services, a mapping center complete with hardware, software and skilled staff was developed within the Election Operations section. Interagency collaboration with the Geographic Information Systems of Montgomery County and the Maryland Department of Planning has afforded elections administrators and staff accurate, precise data, a resource for evaluation, for example, to determine voter concentration and precinct boundary lines; service, for example, confirming No Electioneering limits with campaigners and voters; and explanation, for example, providing election judges with locations of equipment storage areas and electrical and telephone outlets. Utilizing these agencies in a cooperative, mutual information-sharing, working environment has proven valuable. The joint effort has created a multi-tiered product that serves not only the County Board but, also, other County Agencies, individuals and organizations seeking pertinent election information.

Initially, the task requested of the mapping center was to create geographic boundary lines for precincts. Over the years, the service has advanced into a much more comprehensive set of informative maps. With uniform reference sets of maps and diagrams, legal requirements and practical operating procedures are met. Montgomery County is also a diverse community and presenting materials in a visual format facilitates understanding across multi-cultural participants. Uncertainty and the potential for chaos and differing options can be reduced and, potentially, a litigious environment during critical election preparations can be avoided. Transparency is enhanced through accurate documentation made available to political parties involved in the conduct of elections and affirms the mission of a fair, unbiased, successful election—Democracy at its best.

What products are created?
- County maps depicting Congressional, Legislative, Council and School Board Districts
- County maps depicting Precincts, Polling Places and Early Voting Locations
- County maps showing voter population
- County maps displaying zip codes overlaid with jurisdictional districts
- Polling Place Lists with facility addresses and precinct identification numbers
- Precinct maps accompanied by legal descriptions documented for all precinct boundaries
- Polling Place maps displaying aerial views, No Electioneering boundaries, ADA accessible entrances and parking, schematic of the overall facility layout (restrooms, storage, administrative offices, facility service manager location, etc.) and Emergency Evacuation Place (facility’s external meeting location in case of fire or bomb threat emergencies)
- Dimensionally accurate diagrams/schematics illustrating polling room size, layout (entrances, exits, voice/data jacks, power outlets, storage closets, kitchen/break areas, etc.), suggested arrangement of voting equipment and projected Election Day work flow

How are the maps or diagrams created?
- ArcGIS Desktop family is the geographic software choice in Montgomery County
- ArcView is integrated with the GIS database—the MC GIS group, a sound partner providing a plethora of data, is exceptionally attentive and knowledgeable regarding election boundaries
- GIS data provides numerous mapping layer options
- Layers include jurisdictional districts, precincts, voter location data, zip codes, recreation areas
- Desired layers of data are selected from GIS data and then applied to create the maps
- ArcView interacts with other licensed software, i.e. Pictometry—software provides an aerial view of geographic locations, formatted usually as a .PDF file or hardcopy printed directly from software
What equipment/software is needed?

- High volume memory CPU, system minimum RAM 1 gb, system Disc space, 3.2 gb
- Printer/Plotter, Hewlett-Packard, Model C6075B
- Scanner
- Digital Camera with downloading capabilities using County’s choice, Photoshop software
- Mapping software, County’s choice, ArcView
- Integration with GIS database
- Presentation software, i.e. Power Point
- Diagramming software, i.e. SmartDraw
- Aerial software such as MapViewer or Pictometry

Who benefits from the Montgomery County maps and BOE/GIS collaboration?

- Montgomery County Board of Elections—mapping assists with designation of polling places, No Electioneering boundaries, operational details such as equipment storage, electrical outlets and is a visual aid during emergencies
- Election Judges/pollworkers—an important visual resource providing multiple layers of information, enhancing the conduct of efficient elections
- Board Legal Counsel—comprehensive visual references of all polling places
- MC Facility Service personnel that setup polling rooms—equipment set-up references, contacts
- MC Fire & Rescue—internal and external facility diagrams used to assess EMT procedures
- MC Homeland Security—to protect the safety of pollworkers and voters
- MC Police—resource to provide information for drive-by observations for general security and safety and to ensure efficient traffic flow at all polling places on Election Day
- MC Department of Transportation—to assist with support during periods of road improvements/maintenance
- Political Central Committees—to enhance understanding and reference, for example, with voter entrances/exits, No Electioneering limits
- Candidates—to enhance understanding and reference of polling places, voter entrances/exits, No Electioneering limit locations used during campaigns
- MC Residents—provides a standard point of reference to address queries
- MC Administrators—provides standard point of reference to respond to queries
- Students studying political/election activities—provides a reference, information and an example of a successful model in support of transparency

How is the documentation presented?

- Through Board website, [www.777Vote.org](http://www.777Vote.org)
- To pollworkers through “Quick Start Tool Kit” (pollworkers’ manual)
- Available through hardcopy produced at the BOE (production fee charged)
- Through Power Point presentations to groups

Who are the Partners/Contributors?

- GIS
- Maryland Department of Planning
- Maryland and County Redistricting Commissions
- MC Public Schools (MCPS), Division of Construction
- MCPS, Real Estate Division
- MCPS Administrators and school staff
- Capital Improvement Reports
- MC Board Staff Members

The maps reduce misunderstandings and boost information sharing through collaboration assisting election judges, voters and political representatives within the election process; meanwhile providing facility details, standard reference information related to operational details and efficient visual information response for voters from diverse cultural backgrounds. “Mapping Democracy” is respectfully submitted by Montgomery County Board Elections appreciating the opportunity to share mapping as a valuable tool, implemented to assist and educate our esteemed partners in the democratic process.
01-01 / LAYTONSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

NOTICE
ELECTIONEERING
BEYOND THIS
POINT
PROHIBITED
BY LAW

MEN'S BATHROOM
WOMEN'S BATHROOM

LAYTONSVILLE ROAD

MULTI-PURPOSE
ROOM

PARKING

ENTER

BACK DRIVEWAY

TEMPORARY

ENTRANCE
FOR DISABLED
VOTER

TEMPORARY

VAN

OFFICE

KITCHEN

STAGE

Floor Plan of Facility
01-01 Laytonsville Elementary School
21401 Laytonsville Rd.
Laytonsville, MD  20882

THIS IS ONLY A SUGGESTED LAYOUT PLAN
Feel FREE to Modify
DO NOT BLOCK FIRE EXITS

KITCHEN

STORAGE

63'7"

ACCESSIBLE BALLOT STATION

CORRIDOR

STAGE

39'4"

NO CENTER DOOR POSTS

VOTER STANDS ON THIS SIDE

SYMBOL BEING USED FOR VOTING UNIT

This Phone Jack is marked BOE
This is also an Analog / Modem Line

See BSM to use Cafeteria Tables here

PROVISIONAL VOTING

PROVISIONAL APPLICATION

CARD RETRIEVAL

EXIT

ALL-PURPOSE ROOM

INFORMATION DESK

CARD RETRIEVAL

3

EXIT

MOUNTED ON FLOOR

CHIEF JUDGES

ACCESSIBLE BALLOT STATION

BALLOT STATION for the VISUALLY IMPAIRED

VOTING UNIT TABLE

VOTING UNIT

CHALLENGERS & WATCHERS

CHECK-IN TABLES

VOTER STANDS ON THIS SIDE

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VOTING UNIT

CHALLENGERS & WATCHERS

CHECK-IN TABLES

1

Information Desk

2

Check-in Tables

3

Poll book Registers

12 Touch Screen Voting Units

Ken Perschau
Montgomery County
Board of Elections
May 9th, 2011
Rally Point in the event of a Fire

Rally Point in the event of a Bomb Threat

Polling Place

300' Safety Buffer