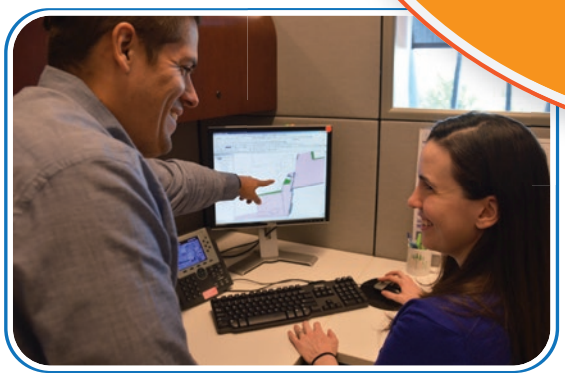
Accurate Geography Is the Starting Point for Accurate Data

An accurate count helps the federal government allocate more than $400 billion in federal funds annually for infrastructure, programs, and services.

Accurate geography allows us to correctly count your community's residents.

Accurate geographic information directly affects the quality of life in your community.

Your participation in geographic programs helps the Census Bureau produce quality data.



United States Census Bureau
U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov

Why are geographic partnership programs important?

A map is a map is a map, right? Actually, no! For every type of geography—such as cities or census tracts—there's a unique type of data. Each of the following geographic partnership programs focus on a different set of geography that enables the Census Bureau to profile every community as accurately as possible.

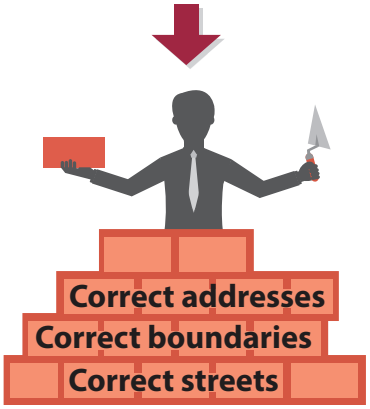
Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS)

The BAS program requests that local, county, state, and tribal governments review and update their legal boundaries every year in the Census Bureau's geographic database. A community's legal boundaries determine its official data from the 2020 Census, American Community Survey, and Population Estimates Program.

It's up to each government to report its legal boundaries through the BAS; no other federal agency collects these data, nor is there a standard collection of this information at the state level.

The Boundary Validation Program (BVP) directly follows the 2020 BAS. The BVP is the final opportunity for the highest elected officials to review their official legal boundaries before the 2020 Census tabulation.

*The **BAS** program occurs **every year**, **beginning in December**. The **BVP** program occurs **every 10 years**, with the next cycle **beginning in early 2020**. For more information, visit www.census.gov/programs-surveys/bas.html. Contact us at geo.bas@census.gov or 1-800-972-5651 or at geo.aiana@census.gov or 1-800-796-3748 (for American Indians and Alaska Natives).*



United States Census 2020

Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA)

During the decennial census, the Census Bureau uses address lists and maps to count people where they live. The Census Bureau needs accurate address data to ensure an accurate 2020 Census count. The LUCA program invites local, state, and tribal officials to review, update, and correct the Census Bureau's address lists and maps before the 2020 Census.

Participating in the LUCA program is a once-a-decade opportunity to review the Census Bureau's addresses and maps for your government.

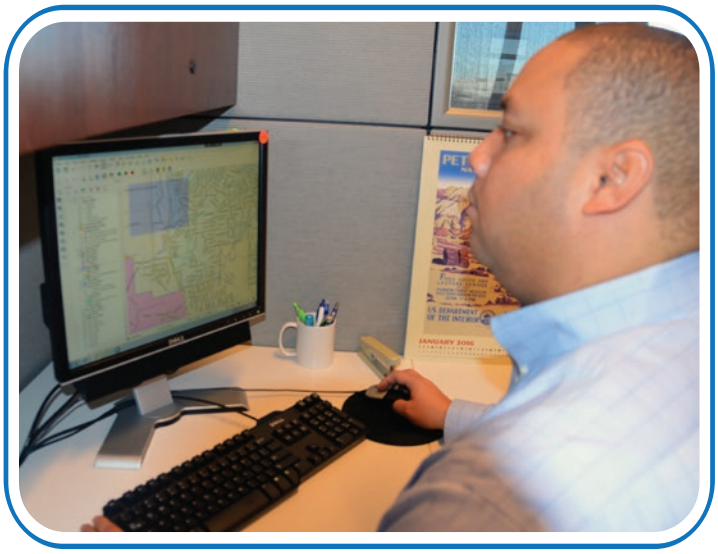
*The **LUCA** program occurs **every 10 years**, with the next cycle **beginning in early 2017**. For more information, visit www.census.gov/geo/partnerships/luca.html. Contact us at geo.2020.luca@census.gov or 1-844-344-0169.*

Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP)

Legally defined geographic areas are important, but they're not the only kinds of geography for which local governments need data. The PSAP helps local, regional, and tribal governments fill in their data gaps by defining statistical boundaries, including tribal statistical boundaries, in their community where no legal boundaries exist. These boundaries define how their communities will get data from the 2020 Census and the next decade of American Community Surveys.

You know your community's geography best. By participating in the PSAP, you can make sure that local, state, and federal agencies have good demographic data about your community for planning and funding.

*The **PSAP** program occurs **every 10 years**, with the next cycle **beginning in fall 2018**. For more information, visit www.census.gov/geo/partnerships. Contact us at geo.psap@census.gov or 301-763-1099.*

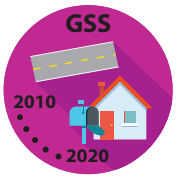


School District Review Program (SDRP)

In the SDRP, state officials review and update school district boundaries, grade ranges, and official names in the Census Bureau's geographic database.

Participating in the SDRP is important because the boundaries and information updated in the SDRP allows the Census Bureau to create detailed data by school district, which is used by the National Center for Education Statistics to allocate Title I funding to school districts.

*The **SDRP** program occurs **every 2 years**, with the next cycles **beginning in August 2017 and August 2019**. For more information, visit www.census.gov/geo/partnerships/sdrp.html. Contact us at geo.school@census.gov or 301-763-1099.*



Geographic Support System (GSS)

The GSS program encourages local, state, and tribal governments to send addresses and road data to the Census Bureau throughout the decade. This program is important because you can report new addresses, which allows these addresses to be included in the American Community Survey and Population Estimates Program.

*The **GSS** is a **continuous** program. For more information, visit www.census.gov/geo/gssi/index.html. Contact us at geo.gss.initiative@census.gov.*

How do I review and update geography?

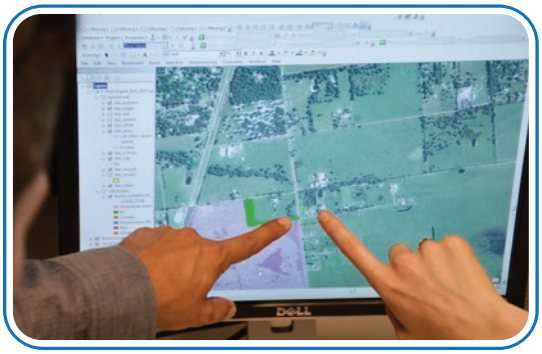
Reviewing and updating geography through these programs is easy. The Census Bureau provides multiple free, user-friendly methods to help you do so.

- **User-friendly software**—The Census Bureau offers a free, customized Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tool for people who don't have geographic training or are not GIS users. You can use the Geographic Update Partnership Software (GUPS) to review and update geography and address lists for your community.

- **GIS (BAS, LUCA)**—If you're an experienced GIS user, you can use your own GIS to review and update Census Bureau shapefiles and the LUCA address lists.

- **Paper maps (BAS, LUCA)**—You can request Census Bureau paper maps of your community and update them using colored pencils.

- **Paper address lists (LUCA)**—LUCA participants can request paper address lists for their government.



You don't have to be an expert geographer to participate!

We want to help you take full advantage of the Census Bureau's geographic partnership programs, so you can get the most useful data about your community. All of the geographic partnership programs offer free in-person and online training. Please check the program Web sites for training information.

Will the Census Bureau contact my government for all of these programs?

For BAS, LUCA, and PSAP, we will contact the highest elected official of your government, as well as a community planner, clerk, administrator, or other person who will complete the work.

For SDRP, we will contact the state Title I coordinator. Local communities can work with their state Title I office to get school district updates to the Census Bureau.

To see the existing boundaries that we have on file for your community, visit the Census Bureau's online map application at <http://tigerweb.geo.census.gov>.

Connect With Us

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