Comparison of Census data products

Analyzing methodology between Census Urban Areas and Census Places and temporally for each dataset (2010 to 2020).

Questions

1. What are the differences between the 2010 and 2020 Census Urban Area Cluster (UAC) datasets?

2. Were there any methodology changes for determining the Census UAC between 2010 and 2020?

3. What are the difference between census places and UAC?

Census Urban Areas 2010 to 2020

Top 5 growing cities (by acres added)	Total Acres (2020)	Acres gained	% Change
Richmond, VA	334,466.9	14,053.2	4.2%
Williamsburg, VA	45,349.3	9,076.0	20%
Fredericksburg, VA	58,099.0	7,819.7	13.5%
Frederick, MD	51,774.8	4,524.9	8.7%
Middletown, DE	15,517.6	4,187.4	2.7%

Top 5 declining cities (by acres lost)	Total Acres (2020)	Acres lost	% Change
Philadelphia, PA--NJ--DE--MD	1,246,673	-51,633.5	-4.1%
Lancaster--Manheim, PA	116,917.8	-43,220.8	-37%
Baltimore, MD	43,2564	-42,134.1	-9.7%
Virginia Beach--Norfolk, VA	356,968.2	-19,728.6	-5.5%
Washington--Arlington, DC--VA--MD	844,488.6	-18,032.1	-2.1%

Top 5 largest new urban areas	Total Acres (2020)
Bel Air--Aberdeen, MD	69,434.43
Westminster, MD	16,917.31
Suffolk, VA	15,670.2
Seaford--Laurel--Bridgeville, DE	15,453.95
Stevensville--Chester--Romancoke, MD	12,234.35

Top 5 largest urban areas lost	Total Acres (2010)
Aberdeen--Bel Air South--Bel Air North, MD	86,269.67
Westminster--Eldersburg, MD	37,130.27
Pottsville, PA	14,971.02
Charles Town--Ranson, WV	11,888.82
Shady Side--Deale, MD	7,516.506

*Count of urban areas gained (2010-2020): **22***

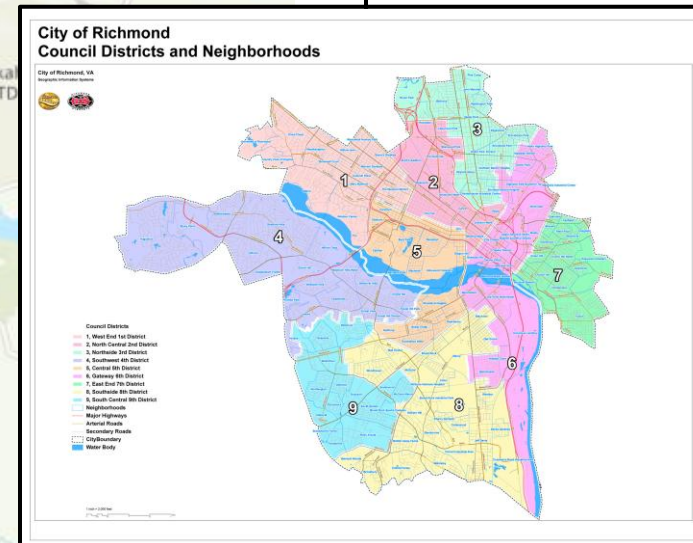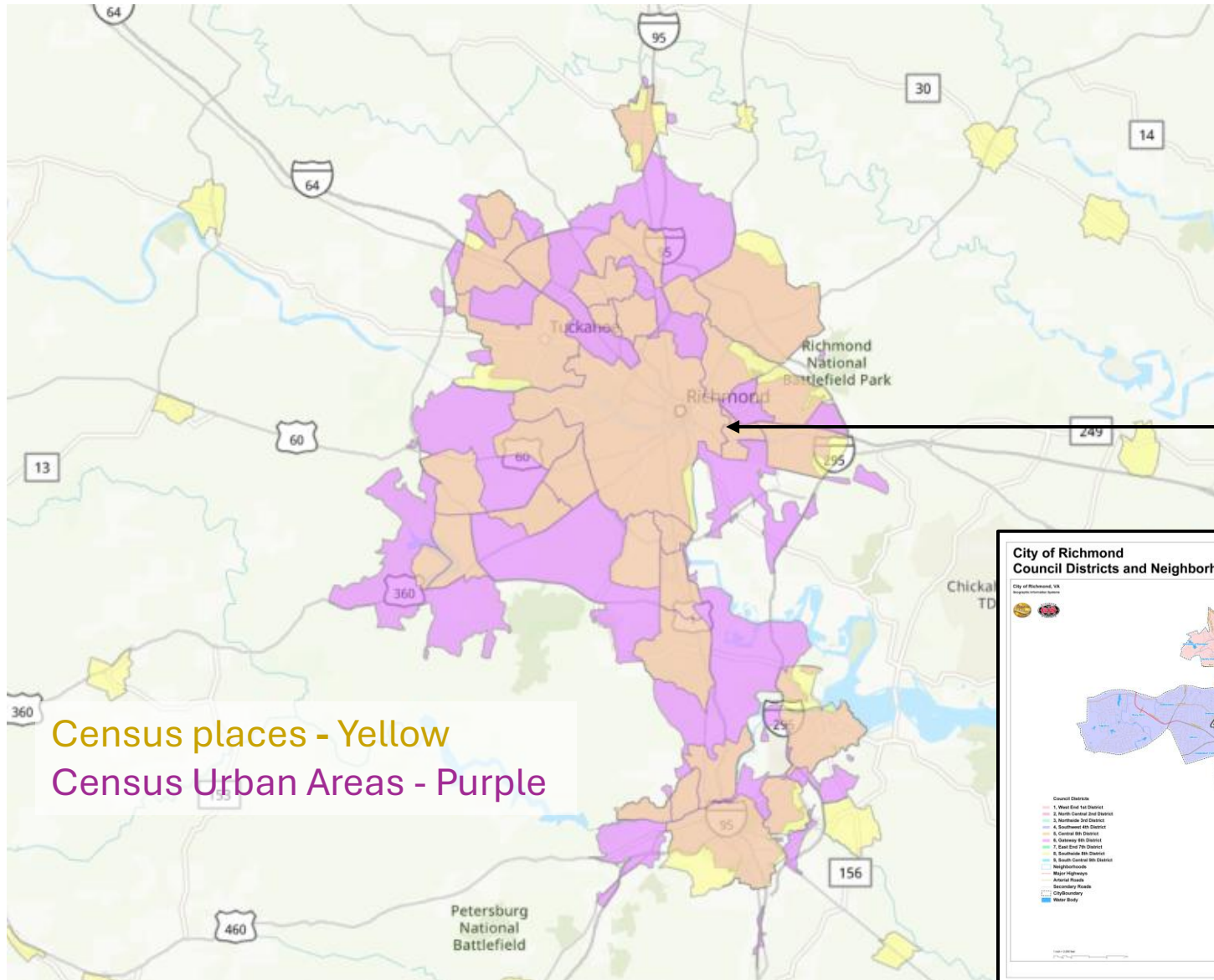*Count of urban areas lost (2010-2020): **64***

Total urban areas in CBW in 2010: 169

Total urban areas in CBW in 2020: 127

Urban Area Methodology Changes (2010 to 2020)

	2010 Criteria	2020 Criteria
Identification of Initial Urban Areas	• Population density and size thresholds by block • Impervious cover derived from land cover	• Housing unit density within blocks • Impervious cover derived from land cover
Qualifying Urban Areas	Based on a minimum threshold of 2,500 people.	Based on a minimum threshold of 2,000 housing units or 5,000 people.
Urban Area Type	<u>Urban Areas</u> - Population greater than **50,000** <u>Urban Area Clusters</u> - Population between **2,500 and 49,999**	All qualifying areas are designated as an "Urban Area." * Urban Area Cluster distinction is depreciated

Census **Places** vs **Urban Areas**

Census places - Yellow
Census Urban Areas - Purple

City of Richmond
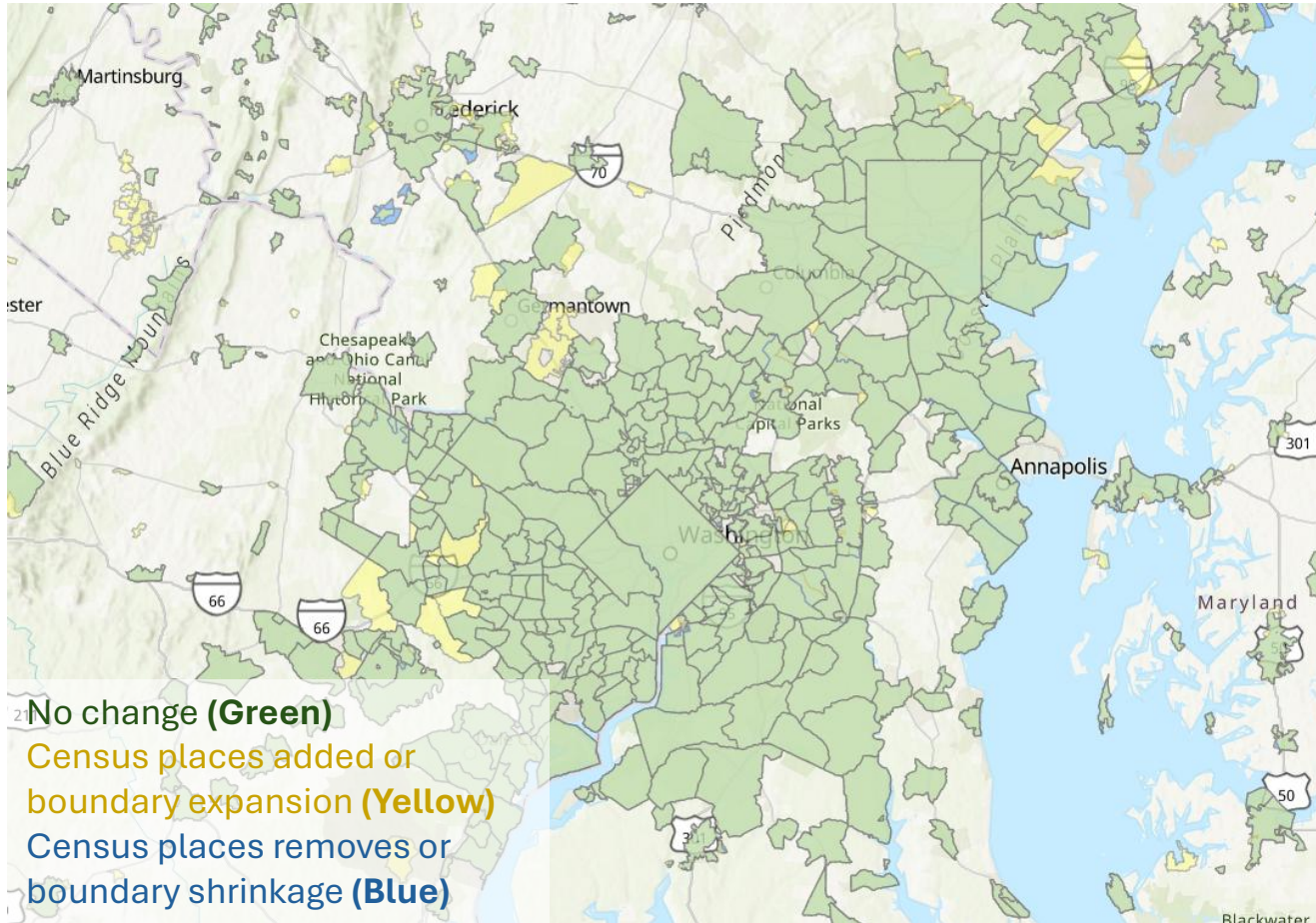Council Districts and Neighborhoods

- The Census Place for Richmond reflects the same geography as the City of Richmond.

- The Census Urban Area for Richmond contains multiple Census Places

Census **Places** vs **Urban Areas**

	Census Designated **Places**	Census **Urban Areas**
Definition	Includes cities, towns, villages (incorporated places) and unincorporated census-designated places (CDPs)	Areas classified based on population density and urbanization
Boundaries	Based on legal boundaries and census blocks	Based on population and development, can cross political boundaries. Boundaries determined by census blocks.
Purpose	Used to track characteristics of specific settlements	Identifies urbanization patterns for infrastructure and policy planning

Census Places 2010 to 2020

No change **(Green)**
Census places added or boundary expansion **(Yellow)**
Census places removes or boundary shrinkage **(Blue)**

- Census places do not typically change in size through time, but new ones are added
- Removal of Census places are not common
- Change in Census place area typically due to legal boundary change and not statistical housing/population increases

Total census places in CBW in 2010: 1772
Total census places in CBW in 2020: 1947

Count of census places lost (2010-2020): 20
Count of census places gained (2010-2020): 195

Conclusions

- There was decline in the # of Census Urban Areas between 2010 and 2020, although the data shows that Urban Areas are at times combines, separated and renamed depending on growth.

- Methodology for determining "urban density" of Census Urban Areas shifted from using population density thresholds (reflected in 2010 data) to housing unit density (reflected in 2020 data).

- The Census Bureau "Urban Area Cluster" distinction was depreciated between 2010 and 2020. Now the CB now uses the "Urban Area" distinction.

- Census Places reflect cities and towns (following legal boundaries), while Urban Areas reflect regions with high development density.

- Census Places are not necessarily urban.