



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
NEW BEDFORD, MA

2021 OCT -7 PM 12:43

CITY CLERK

**CITY OF NEW BEDFORD**  
JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR

October 6, 2021

City Council President Joseph P. Lopes  
Honorable Members of the City Council  
City of New Bedford  
133 William Street  
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Council President Lopes and Honorable Members of the City Council:

I am submitting for your consideration the enclosed Order approving the Re-precincting Plan for the City of New Bedford as required by Massachusetts law.

The proposed New Bedford Re-precincting Plan, also enclosed and titled "Proposed Ward and Precinct Lines," consists of the following:

- A re-precincting map reflecting proposed ward and precinct lines.
- The legal descriptions of the boundaries of the proposed ward and precinct lines depicted on the map.
- New Bedford Block Listing population data from the Federal 2020 Census

As you know, every ten years, following the release of federal census population information, each Massachusetts municipality is legally required to re-draw its voting precinct boundaries based on changes in the municipal population. The Re-precincting Plan which accompanies the Order includes a small number of precinct boundary adjustments based on New Bedford's population change according to the 2020 federal census.

The Plan was initially prepared by the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth and provided to an interdepartmental working group comprised of staff from the Planning Department, Elections Office, and Solicitor's Office. Working group staff worked to review and refine the Plan in collaboration with a specialized municipal technical assistance unit of the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth. The Re-precincting Plan fully conforms to Massachusetts law and meets the following legal requirements:

- Ward populations are within five percent (5%) of the average ward population for New Bedford;
- Each precinct population is within five percent (5%) of the average precinct population.
- No precinct contains more than 4,000 residents;
- Precincts are “composed of compact and contiguous territory” without protruding fingers or long tails;
- Redrawn boundaries do not result in dilution of minority group members’ votes.

Regrettably, the window for municipal approval is greatly compressed this year, with the necessary 2020 federal census data not being released by the U.S. Census Bureau until August 12, 2021. Only then was the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth able to provide to the City a draft map and supporting data--which it did so on September 9, 2021. In sum, Massachusetts municipalities have lost roughly four months from the typical period that municipalities had in the past to complete their work. New Bedford, like other Massachusetts municipalities, has nevertheless worked diligently over the past several weeks to create a fully statutorily compliant plan within the shortened time frame.

I encourage the Council to complete its consideration and approval of the Re-precincting Plan as soon as possible. The Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth has encouraged municipalities to maintain the process and timeframe for completing their re-precincting plans that were in place prior to the legislation (House Bill 4118) signed into law recently by Governor Baker. [The legislation requires municipalities to obtain approval of their Plan by December 15, 2021 from the state-level oversight body, the Local Election District Review Commission (LEDRC).] The LEDRC has already reviewed and approved more than 80 re-precincting plans submitted by municipalities across Massachusetts, and plans continue to be reviewed and approved by the LEDRC on a weekly basis. Be advised that the LEDRC retains authority to take over reprecincting from municipalities that do not fulfill their requirements under the law within the allotted time, so timely Council action remains important.

Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,

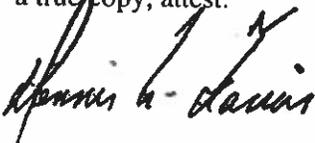
Jon Mitchell  
Mayor

Enclosures

**IN CITY COUNCIL**, October 14, 2021

Referred to the Committee on Appointments and Briefings. Dennis W. Farias, City Clerk

a true copy, attest:



City Clerk



*City of New Bedford*  
MASSACHUSETTS

**OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK**  
133 WILLIAM STREET  
NEW BEDFORD, MA 02740-6182  
Tel: 508-979-1450 • Fax: 508-991-6225

**DENNIS W. FARIAS**  
CITY CLERK

**STEPHANIE MACOMBER**  
ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

**SUSAN M. HENRIQUES**  
ASSISTANT COUNCIL CLERK

October 14, 2021

Local Election Districts Review Commission  
Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth  
c/o Elections Division  
One Ashburton Place, Room 1705  
Boston, MA 02108

**RE: CITY OF NEW BEDFORD - 2021 RE-PRECINCTING**

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that at a meeting held on October 14, 2021, the City Council voted to accept as presented the 2021 Re-Precincting Plan for the City of New Bedford.

A true copy ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

Name

President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

---

**Name**

---

**Name**

---

**Name**

---

**Name**

---

**Name**

---

**Name**