

Dear Baldwin MLS Members,

As a part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining a fair, accurate, and legally sound Multiple Listing Service, we are making an important change to how geographic areas are defined and displayed within the MLS.

Effective the week of February 16, 2026, the MLS will discontinue the use of our committee drawn areas. Going forward, geographic areas will be limited to objectively defined boundaries such as county, city, zip code, subdivision/condo complex, or member drawn customized shapes requested by their clients.

Committee drawn areas-while often created with good intentions-can be interpreted as subjective geographic delineations. In today's regulatory and legal environment, these boundaries may be perceived as reflecting exclusionary practices, including what could be characterized as "redlining," even when no such intent exists.

Federal fair housing laws and related guidance place significant emphasis on avoiding practices that could be construed as discriminatory or exclusionary. To protect the MLS, its brokers, and its subscribers, it is essential that all geographic data presented in the system be neutral, transparent, and based on widely recognized standards.

This update brings our MLS in line with best practices adopted across the real estate industry. Many MLSs nationwide have already moved away from custom or committee drawn areas in favor of standardized geographic definitions, such as municipalities, postal codes, school districts, and other objectively established boundaries.

By standardizing area definitions, we ensure greater consistency and clarity for consumers and practitioners, reduced legal and compliance exposure for participants, and alignment with fair housing principles and evolving regulatory expectations.

We recognize that area definitions are an important tool for market understanding, and this change is not intended to limit your ability to serve clients effectively. Rather, it is a necessary step to ensure our MLS remains compliant, trusted, and sustainable in a changing regulatory landscape.

In the next week, Baldwin REALTORS® MLS will be sending detailed communications on what you will need to do with any saved searches that include the area field. If you have questions, please contact the MLS Department directly at 251-270-0328 or MLS@BaldwinRealtors.com.

Thank you,

Wendy Alley
Baldwin REALTORS®
MLS Executive Officer