

1967, and the land records on January 1, 1968, using the same procedures and type of equipment employed in Prince George's County.

As a part of our microfilm service in the past, we provided the Commissioner of the Land Office with microfilm copies of the currently recorded land records of the respective counties and Baltimore City. These records were filmed especially for the Hall of Records by the Clerks of Court or were a part of the projection print recording program carried on through Hall & McChesney, Inc. Our personnel supervised the filming, inspected the film, and delivered it to the Land Office. With the abolition of the office of Commissioner of the Land Office and the transfer of the duties and functions of the Land Office to the Hall of Records, the preservation of security microfilm copies of current land records now becomes a legal, rather than a de facto, responsibility of the Hall of Records.

As a result of this transfer, the Records Management Division was given responsibility for receiving, indexing, filing, and providing copies of subdivision plats transmitted by the Clerks of Court as required by Article 17, Section 61, Annotated Code of Maryland, 1957 Edition. While this program has been in operation for a number of years, improvements are needed. Some counties, through local legislation, have restricted the size of plats to manageable proportions, but State legislation is needed to insure that all plats are limited to a size that will make the storage and reproduction of the plats easier. We hope that such legislation can be obtained in the near future.

The Records Management program continues to be based upon the establishment of realistic records schedules governing the retention and disposal of State and local records. The importance of the schedule cannot be overemphasized, for it is, in a single document, a complete program for the disposition of records. However, the widespread use of computers by State agencies presents problems in establishing and applying the schedules. Among these are the ability of the machine to produce paper at a tremendous rate and the difficulties of evaluating records which exist only in the more exotic magnetic forms.

The computers continue to produce greater and more unmanageable masses of paper, much of which must be destroyed within a short time, out of sheer necessity. Generally, this destruction of paper is justified on the premise that the record copy exists in other record forms, such as magnetic tapes and disc files. Actually there is no practical way to insure that a record copy does, in fact, continue to exist even in altered form.