



- Fair and Equitable Assessment**
 A parcel map would help both county and local assessors to locate parcels from various points of view that affect value and classification. Such points of view include location with regard to access (roads, water, trails); location with regard to man-made features both good (parks, malls, hospitals, schools) and unpleasant (active gravel pits, junkyards); location with regard to natural features both good (lakes, rivers, panoramic views) and bad (erosion areas, low lands subject to seasonal flooding); location with regard to market trends (changes in demographics, investment opportunities); and location with regard to legal use (zoning laws, habitat restrictions).
- Improves Real Estate Record Analysis**
 The Assessor's Office receives innumerable amounts of data requests from real estate professionals researching information on comparable sales, acreage, bath and bedroom counts, assessments, taxes, land values, price per acres, and a host of other facts. Such data requests have made the Assessor's staff de facto research assistants. GIS will substantially reduce the number of these requests.
- Improves Assessment Tracking and Analysis**
Improves Sales Trend Trackings: GIS is being used more and more to display such sales trends as price paid per acre or front footage, depreciation of existing buildings as markets heat up or cool off, effects of recent changes in legal use on a market, influx of out-of-county buyers, conversion of parcels from one use to another. Such displays can be used by assessors to write valuation schedules and by taxpayers to judge the reasonableness of their

market values and the reasons behind increases/decreases.

Provides Ability to Match Undocumented New Construction & Structures to a Parcel: An appraiser who comes across undocumented structures, or first-time new construction, can use the GIS parcel layer to identify the parcel and its owner.

- Improves Auditing Assessment**
Enhances Administration Functions: GIS can be used to display such sales trends as price paid per acre or front footage, depreciation of existing sales. **Provides Equalization Support:** Parcel maps can display assessed values of parcels side-by-side throughout a neighborhood, township, or region. Assessors can compare, for instance, the consistency of their estimated market values on contiguous 40-acre parcels, or platted lots. **Assists Board of Appeal and Equalization:** GIS helps the Appeal Board members to "get their bearings" as taxpayers come in one at a time and appeal the value/class on a particular parcel. GIS maps would help the board make judgements with regard to locale, neighboring influences.
- Improves Service and Efficiency**
Improves Response Time to Data Requests: GIS data is linked through a web portal to reduce information requests by phone calls, walk-in, and e-mail questions regarding basic assessment data. A web site using a parcel map allows the internet user to drill down to the parcel level to find such information and compare properties. This would significantly reduce employee time devoted to data gathering.



- **Improves Review Processes**

Currently, when examining documents, the Recorder's Office in many instances must access maps and data in other departments to complete a review and determination of a document. This method slows down the process and ties up staff in several departments. For example: the Examiner of Titles and the Recorder's staff must review maps from scattered sources when examining and reviewing documents. Often they must physically go to the Auditor's Tax Department or call the County Surveyor's office, causing additional staff workload in all departments. With GIS, Recorder's staff can internally review documents, saving time for both departments.

- **Assists in Certificate of Title Determination**

A review of GIS will assist Recorder's staff in assessing the need for a residue certificate of title as part of a transaction.

- **Enhances Business Interaction**

- Identifies Exact Location of Cellular Phone Callers

The Recorder's Office records documents and creates certificates that many businesses seek for its normal business transactions. These businesses are title companies or attorneys doing title searches, abstracts, owners and encumbrance reports, title insurance, and much more. With GIS, a business can quickly query and locate a person or property (by address, legal description or clicking on property- the latter of which currently does not exist), and begin the review process. This improves the efficiency of the businesses and reduces the amount of time county staff spends helping businesses locate a site.

- **Assists Cleaning-Up Parcels with Clouded Property Titles**

Many developments are well down the road of securing private and public dollars, permits, and bids only to hit an obstacle of a clouded property title. Title problems can be expensive, cause delays, or kill a project. There are key parcels in Duluth and other communities that remain undeveloped in part because clearing the title can be cumbersome, and the city or developer is unwilling to take on the responsibility of clearing title.

- **Improves Service and Efficiency**

- Quick Drill Down- Improves Ability to Review Documents Quickly/Easily:

GIS will dramatically improve the ability of Recorder's staff, businesses, and residents to quickly search, locate, and review a wide range of legal documents. Currently, there is no ability for searches by address, which causes problems (additional research) of locating the correct documents filed on a particular property.

Improves Response Time to Data Requests: The Recorder's Office receives innumerable phone calls, e-mails and written requests from people looking for objective data such as lot size, recording data of documents, whether Torrens or Abstract, and the existence of liens or encumbrances. With GIS, recorded documents and data can be quickly searched and located, thus reducing the amount of time for each request.

- **Web Portal: Enhances Access 24/7**

A web site using a parcel map that allows the internet user to drill down to the parcel level to find such information would significantly reduce employee time devoted to such mundane data gathering.