



Highlights

- GIS employed to share Tax Maps with everyone
- Collaboration and data sharing promote efficiencies

Return on Investment (ROI)

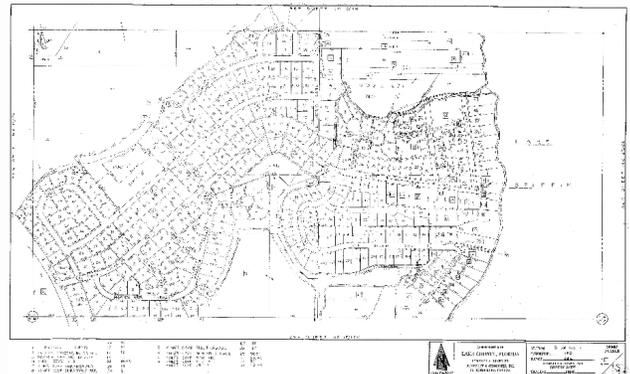
- End of duplication of effort
- Saving of man-hours
- Higher accuracy of data

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Lake County's new Property Appraiser, Carey Baker, is embracing GIS technology to bring accurate and up-to-date digital tax maps to citizens, developers, and businesses. These digital tax maps are in addition to the county GIS interactive map and can be viewed and downloaded for free from the web site.

Background

Since the early 1960's, when the Property Appraiser's Office took over the maintenance of cadastral tax maps (property ownership maps) from the Hunnicutt & Associates, Inc. title company of Tampa, FL, mapping was performed manually on hand-drawn paper maps. These maps identified property boundaries, subdivisions, roads, lakes, and other geographic feature. They were considered the "official" tax maps and used by everyone in their office to locate, measure, and assess property for tax purposes. They also became popular with realtors, developers, other county offices, and ordinary citizens to locate and view property.



The Issue

While the hand drawn maps were reasonably accurate and current for the Property Appraiser's requirements, they were time-consuming to maintain so updates tended to focus on an annual cycle, allowing the map to be truly up to date only on January 1st of each year. Changes throughout the year could take months to appear on the maps and distribution of map pages was a logistical challenge. Eventually, the paper maps were electronically scanned for easier distribution, but as the original paper maps wore out or became torn, new maps had to be created, again by hand, redrawing every boundary line, parcel number, dimension and feature.

In the early 2000's the County's GIS Division began creating a seamless digital map of the county's property boundaries, but until recently the official tax maps were still meticulously drawn by hand in the Property Appraiser's Office.

The Solution

With the completion of the GIS TaxParcels layer and it's inclusion in the county-wide Enterprise Geodatabase in 2008*, it was time to start thinking about retiring the old paper maps and employing the new digital data. This data is being continually updated by a team of ca-

* see Lake County Tax parcels Migrate to an Enterprise GIS at www.lakecountyfl.gov/pdfs/gis/case_study_parcels.pdf

dastral mappers, keeping the data within a 30 day turn around for inclusion in the TaxParcels GIS layer. It is also, arguably more accurate than the hand-drawn maps, since it references sub-meter accurate section corners and survey markers, and uses high-level computer drawing technology to map boundaries to within inches of the survey. It is also the very same data that people are viewing on all the GIS interactive web maps and other locally produced static maps.

A digital mapbook was created to mimic the look of the older paper maps, reproducing the size, scale, and placement of map elements. Each page of the mapbook represents either a north or south half section at a scale of 1:2400 (or a full section at a scale of 1:4800 in more rural areas). Since the new maps are being created digitally and can be reproduced on color plotters, color was added to various map features to help highlight them and allow them to stand out visually—lakes are now blue, subdivision boundaries are orange, subdivision block boundaries are purple, etc.



An added bonus, since all the data is available anyway, was the creation of full section aerial photos that can be viewed and downloaded. Each contains the most recent aerial imagery, plus tax parcel boundaries; subdivision lots, blocks and boundaries; street names; and section lines at a 1:2400 scale.

On a monthly automated schedule the digital files of each map page are converted to PDF format and stored on the county's web server where they can be accessed through a [web application](#) and either viewed online or downloaded for printing.

The Benefit

By utilizing the existing, maintained GIS TaxParcels data, the Property Appraiser is avoiding duplication of effort, increasing the speed and accuracy of valuable data, and promoting transparency by making this data available to all. Man hours spent hand-drawing the maps and manually scanning them into a digital format is eliminated, and new information is made available in a timely manner. Anyone with a web browser has access to every tax map page 24 hours a day.

Visit the Lake County Property Appraiser's web page at www.lakecopropappr.com/tax-maps.aspx or the GIS Map Gallery at www.lakecountyfl.gov/maps to view the new Tax Maps