

DEAF SMITH COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

Geographic Information System

Since 2011 the Deaf Smith County Appraisal District has developed and maintained an electronic mapping system. A mapping system can be a valuable appraisal tool as it can give information concerning location, size, shape and other factors; ratio studies can be enhanced, analyzing property characteristics, identifying neighborhoods and determining use of property; maps can help the appraisers to find, inspect and appraise property. In addition to helping the Appraisal District, a good mapping system is an important public resource as it can provide valuable information to the community, other governmental entities and the taxpayers.

Overview: The District's GIS shows the boundaries of parcels of land with the size and location; they show taxing districts, streets, additions and subdivisions, lots, blocks and sections, ownership, property identification number and other valuable information. The mapping system comes with aerial information that can be very helpful in identifying, measuring, determining use of property and improvements.

Each parcel is identified by an alphanumeric code called a "geo id." This number is unique for each parcel, is based on the legal description and should help group properties in a subdivision, or rural block and sections or township and range. This grouping is beneficial for finding property and the property adjacent or near the property as well as helping the appraiser appraise property in a "working order" that saves time and expense.

Accurate research and documentation was needed to build and maintain a mapping system. The district will continue to process deeds to find ownership changes including splits and merges. Also, when meets and bounds are needed, deed research will be done to provide this information. If property owners will share the surveys of their property, we will make copies and update the maps.

The mapping system will be "standardized" from one map to another, neat, easy to read by a "layman" yet provide detailed, helpful and accurate information. However, the accuracy is limited, because the maps are not produced from ground surveys. Also, these maps are intended for property identification and inventory, not to resolve legal disputes over ownership.

Creating a new mapping system is so demanding in time and effort that the DSCAD has contracted with a private company to do the job. This company has created the base maps, the layers and will also update the maps periodically.

GIS System: The Deaf Smith County Appraisal District has a GIS (geographic information system) mapping. The benefits of a GIS system is the ability to have overlapping map layers, each containing a specific kind of information and this information is completely integrated with each layer and the data in the computer system. Currently the layers are:

- 2012 Aerials
- 2010 Aerials
- Streets

- Parcels (this layer includes ownership and property information)
- Lot Lines
- Schools
- City Limits
- Sections
- Blocks and Townships

The advantages of a computerized mapping system are many, for example it can be a powerful analytical tool in property appraisal, productivity can be improved as the maps are at the appraiser's fingertips (no more hunting for lost paper maps) and there are variable scales in a computerized mapping system, making it easier and quicker to use. An example of the flexibility would be the ability to select all parcels between one and five acres, more than 2,000 sqft but less than \$100,000 in value and that has sold in the past year. These properties can be found and identified on a map very quickly, displaying this information (and more) and be color coded. This type of research can be used in sales ratio studies. In addition assessment of farmland requires detailed information on land use, especially in irrigated areas of the county maps with the aerial overlay can provide much of this information.

Availability to the Public: This mapping system is also on the internet and can be accessed through a link when someone looks up property on our website. Maps can be printed from the website, in the office, burned to a CD or downloaded to an FTP site. In addition shapefiles can be purchased from the Contractor's website.