



MEMO

To: MT Geospatial Info Advisory Council Members
From: Genevieve Lighthiser
Subject: Public Comment
Date: 11/8/2024

Public Comments received: 2

The City of Kalispell is in terrible need of better spatial accuracy for the parcel data. Throughout the city, the data is shifted entire lots when compared to GPS data and aerial photography, making it very confusing when the parcels are used on a map with any other data. It is also impossible to do any kind of spatial analysis with the parcel data since it is so inaccurate.

We are wondering if the council has any suggestions for a solution. One idea we have is to approach the Flathead County GIS Department (who maintains the parcel data) with a proposal to hire a consultant to help clean up the parcels in the City, but we/they would likely need a grant to help fund this work. Therefore, we are further wondering about the likelihood of MGIA grant funds being available for next year's grant cycle to help guide our conversation with the County. Thank you.

Mindy Cochran
Kalispell, MT

I learned something rather interesting a few weeks ago.

Although many people use Cadastral for property identification, I learned that those property boundary lines as seen in Cadastral are NOT exact. That Cadastral was designed more for taxation but not for official survey lines. (I certainly did not know that.)

Where can a person find the exact surveyed boundary lines?

Is there a disclaimer about this on Cadastral to let all the real estate agents and related professionals and consumers know this? It becomes an issue when our real estate paperwork



used Cadastral information but then we found out afterwards that what we thought were our property lines are not accurate property boundaries based upon land surveyors.

And one other interesting piece of information that may not be related to this committee, but I found incredibly interesting too. I learned this first hand based on a real situation involving a Montana resident. When two people get a divorce and are using divorce lawyers, there may be a situation where the previously co-owned property is awarded to one person. In that moment, the property transfers the ownership to the one person but that apparently does not include the mineral or water rights of that same property. Upon inquiring “why” the discrepancy, the response received was “divorce lawyers are not the same as real estate lawyers” -- there’s a whole new layer of real estate legal information not necessarily known by divorce attorneys. Isn’t that fascinating????!! How could the MGIAC brainstorm ways to educate Montana residents regarding this?

Is there a way to take maps and overlay the water rights ownership, mineral rights ownership, with the property ownership all in one view listing all the associated owners? Or a better idea...??

Perpetually Curious,

~Heidi Sue

Heidi Sue Adams, MS | Logan Health Medical Library