

Montana Cadastral Help

[Website Tutorial – Learn the basics plus tips and tricks](#)

Who to call for assistance:

- Local Department of Revenue Staff ([Contact Information by County](#))
 - To request corrections to any information provided in a parcel’s Property Record Card. The Montana Department of Revenue maintains the database displayed by the Property Record Card.
 - To understand the meaning of coding and terms used in a Property Record Card. Some clarification may be found in [this list of codes](#).
- Montana State Library Staff (406-444-5354)
 - To report problems with the performance of this map application.
 - For help with how to use the map application.

Known Issues:

Issue:	Map doesn’t display
Cause:	The map application has changed, but your web browser is looking at a cached, old copy of the page
Fix:	Press Ctrl+F5 to force a browser refresh or press Ctrl+Shift+Delete to clear browsing history, cookies, and cached images and files
Issue:	Property search causes Chrome browser to crash
Cause:	The Chrome browser in use is not the most recent version
Fix:	Update the Chrome browser to the most recent version
Workaround:	Zoom in on the map a bit then perform your search

Purpose of the site:

This site is intended to provide the public with basic functionality to research information on public and private property. It is not intended as an end-all application that serves every specialized need. This site performs the following basic tasks:

- Search for property information by geocode, owner, or subdivision (use the “parcel search” tool)
- Search for property information by zooming in to a specific map area and identifying one parcel at a time
- Download the parcel data and the Department of Revenue Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) data

MAPS

Street View

Displays a map of Montana with layers of roads, counties, Indian reservations, private and public land parcels.

Satellite View

Displays a map of Montana by way of satellite and aerial images. Also displays road, county, and parcel layers.

Conservation Easements

A conservation easement protects private lands from development that would destroy or degrade a property's scenic, wildlife, agricultural or recreational values. In many ways, a conservation easement is a document that establishes the landowner's vision for the land. The land trust works with current and future landowners to steward the land as the easement donor envisioned and if necessary defend that vision now and into the future. Conservation easements are legal agreements that a landowner voluntarily negotiates with a qualified land trust. The conservation agreement establishes the landowner's commitment to limit development of their land to conserve the property's natural values. A conservation easement is negotiated between the landowner and a land trust based in part on the landowner's vision and priorities, so easements vary in intent and purpose. But practically and legally, easements typically restrict these land developments: Subdivision for residential or commercial activities, dumping of toxic waste, and surface mining. It is important to note that under the terms of a conservation easement the landowner continues to own, and manage, the property. The property still produces crops, hay, livestock, timber and other commodities. The landowner still makes all the farm/ranch decisions, still pays property taxes, and because the goal of the easement is to conserve open lands, the goal of the easement is to preserve the elements of a working farm or ranch.

Public Land Survey System (PLSS)

A way of subdividing and describing land in the United States. All lands in the public domain are subject to subdivision by this rectangular system of surveys, which is regulated by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Township

- An approximately 36-mile square area of land, containing 36 sections.
- A horizontal row of townships in the PLSS.

Range

A vertical column of townships in the PLSS.

Section

A one-square-mile block of land, containing 640 acres, or approximately one thirty-sixth of a township. Due to the curvature of the Earth, sections may occasionally be slightly smaller than one square mile.

Hydrography/Surface Water

A comprehensive set of digital spatial data that contains information about surface water features such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, springs and wells.

SEARCH

What is a Geocode?

A geocode in the Montana Department of Revenue's Orion appraisal system is a 17 digit property identifier that is the primary database key between the map and Orion database. In most cases it is unique to a tax parcel polygon although exceptions can be found. It is geo-referenced in the sense that a knowledgeable user could locate what county, township, section and quarter section a property is from the first 9 digits if they had a cross walk between the four digit township (digits 2 through 6) code and a list Montana townships.

What is Assessment Code?

This is a unique number that identifies one or more properties for the county tax billing process.

What is Certificate of Survey?

It is a drawing that shows the lot lines and size, as well as the "improvements" or buildings, fences and other man-made objects. A survey is prepared by a licensed surveyor who will visit the property, take the measurements and guarantee their accuracy.

Tips for Search By Address

When typing an address into the Address Locator box, remember the following:

REQUIRED = Address

OPTIONAL = City and Zip

Examples:

125 N Roberts St, Helena

125 N Roberts St, 59601

DATA

What is the Cadastral Framework?

Cadastral data is the information about rights and interest in land. Cadastral data may also be known as real estate data, parcel information, or tax parcel information. There are many legal and historical nuances surrounding the management of cadastral information. The Cadastral NSDI/MSDI simplifies these subtleties by providing cadastral information in different components, cadastral reference (GCDB PLSS in Montana), parcels, and related coincident geometry (trust lands, stipulations, subsurface rights, boundaries, etc.) which all should carry a core set of information to support identified business process needs. (More Details and History of the Framework...)

What can I do with the data?

You can use the Montana Cadastral Data in your own software programs (we assume GIS software but there might be other applications). It takes you to an FTP site that has 56 County folders. Within each folder is a map data file and a CAMA file. We now distribute the map data only in ESRI Personal Geodatabase format. The CAMA data are distributed in Microsoft SQL Server format. CAMA data is linked to parcel data via the parcel geocode.

TOOLS

Identify

This is a very important tool that lets you identify a particular piece of property – it opens a panel that shows the property/parcel details you picked.

Quick Zoom

Zooms in directly to a City, County, or Township, Range, Section based on user selections.

Buffer Select

You can use the Buffer tool to identify or define an area within a specified distance around a feature.

Area Select (Polygon)

The Draw Polygon tool allows users to draw a freehand selection area directly into the map viewer. Simply click once, and then click to continue drawing in a shape, then click again if necessary depending on the shape you are drawing. Finally double-click to complete and highlight the polygon area. All land parcels within the polygon will be selected and owners will be displayed in a list available to click on and view details.

Measure

This tool is a ruler – lets you measure a map distance in miles

Zoom Out

Looks like a minus sign – if you zoom too far in, just click this button to move the view out and see more of the map.

Zoom In

Looks like a plus sign – this zooms you into the map. This is now a statewide map so this is a very important tool.

Previous Map

The arrow pointing left – takes you back to the previous view before you did something like zoom in or out.

Next map

The arrow pointing right – takes you forward to the view before you clicked 'Previous Map'.

Zoom to State

Zooms out to the original map view when you came into the site. Click the “Montana Cadastral” logo in the upper left.

Zoom to box

Zooms to a user defined rectangular area. Hold down the shift key, click on the map, hold down the mouse button and drag the mouse over the area you want to zoom in on.

Toggle from Property Record Card to Map

You can hide the property record card and bring it back by using the blue arrow on the top left of the property record card.

Mobile Devices

This application has been designed to work on tablets and some mobile phones.

\$0 Value

A parcel with a final land value, final building value, full reappraisal value, or a taxable market value of \$0.00 typically indicates a change in value in the current tax year due to a change in property status (i.e. new construction, demolition, land use changes, dividing of parcels, etc.). The cadastral web site will display \$0.00 value information for these parcels until an Assessment Notice has been mailed to the property owner during the following tax year formally notifying the property owner of the new value. For specific valuation information on a parcel, contact the local Department of Revenue office.

The MONTANA CADASTRAL MAPPING PROJECT is maintained by:

Montana State Library

1515 East 6th Avenue

Helena MT 59620-1800

406-444-5354