The Case for a National Parcels Dataset

Real property (parcel) boundaries are a fundamental part of the nation's geospatial framework. Parcels mapped by local authorities for tactical purposes are then shared to the state and eventually to national level as a strategic resource.

Local governments are responsible for capturing property boundaries, which are the foundation for real estate administration. When a disaster strikes, local parcels integrated at the state level quickly support analysis of impacted areas that cross county and state lines. These parcels also delineate federal lands, distinguish private from public land, and may define Tribal boundaries. A national parcel dataset would extend the capabilities of federal programs addressing issues such as resource development, agricultural use, or active forest management. The vision would support the Federal Land Asset Inventory Reform[1] by allowing federal real property agencies to see a comprehensive view of their private property neighbors. Parcels are ideal building blocks for many administrative boundaries from emergency response boundaries, to sewer districts.

> *If the golden rule of real estate is location, location, location; then imagine the power of a single public site where you could see how the parcels fit together, how big they are and who owns them for the whole country.*

Parcels are important to private sector interests, including real estate industry, economic development, insurance, and projects supported by the private sector such as broadband mapping, engineering, and real estate development. Unfortunately, the current status of the nation's parcel data is not complete, and accessible in every state. NSGIC could use current technology to go beyond current limits and bring this important dataset to include the nation. The US Census Bureau suggests "sharing address and **parcel** data online."

Current State

Not all states have coordinated parcel programs. NSGIC hopes to see improvements with a coordinated national effort already underway. Most states have parcel data for at least 80% of their jurisdictions and good working relationships with local governments, who map parcels. Most states have publicly available data,

> *Recent research has shown that the annual collection of parcel data for a state can show a savings statewide of over $2M to the state and local government each year, due to the reduction in repetitive data collection.*

[1] The Federal Land Asset Inventory Reform (FLAIR) Act is a provision found in H.R.2617 to create a current and accurate inventory of Federal land.

and important details within the datasets; however, fewer states have funding to operate a statewide parcels dataset.

The Case for Open Data

To maximize the value of the National Parcel Dataset, it should be considered a public resource usable by all. Disasters don't end at the state line, and the same can be said of many other challenges that can be solved with parcel data. States that have open parcel data that is used by researchers and developers have experienced positive outcomes for smart transportation, economic development and more.

Ask:
- Support the NSGIC efforts to better understand the completeness of the dataset in each state.
- Explore pilot activities where state parcel programs might support federal agencies responding to the Federal Land Asset Inventory Reform.
- Provide oversight on the implementation of the newly passed MAPWaters Act (H.R.187), which calls for the inclusion of existing data, maps, and resources developed under the MAPLands Act the implementation of which has been slower than stipulated. Federal land parcels are best mapped and managed in the context of adjoining property parcels.

2025 Parcel Access

Legend:
- Download or Feature API
- Internal, Image API, or Parcel Viewer Only
- None or Unknown