



FREE AND OPEN DATA

GIS
News

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GIS 101

Come and Get it! Free Data!

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GIS data licensing changes

Dakota County has licensed GIS data for a fee since the 1990's. Over the years, many land developers and real estate companies found the data to be very useful and cost-effective. However, the license was too restrictive for some customers. For others, the fees were too high, forcing them to find other sources or simply do without the data. The world has changed since the 1990's and Dakota County has now changed its GIS data policies, making all public GIS data available at no cost and without licensing.

Does that mean no more data requests?

Yes and no. We don't yet have all the data available that you would want us to publish, but we are getting there. So GIS staff may have to extract some data and email it to you. But the good news is there are no documents to sign anymore. A new disclaimer will accompany the data.

What data is available and in what formats?

Currently, there are a number of layers already available, including aerial photography, Commissioner Districts,

various elevation layers, seven years of foreclosures, municipal boundaries, and other property related layers. As we move forward we will also publish planimetrics layers; buildings, road edges, and layers that come from GIS users in other County departments. Data are being published in their native formats and we work towards providing them in other standard formats: file geodatabase, shapefile and AutoCAD DWG. Also available are our web mapping services through our REST end point (<http://gis2.co.dakota.mn.us/arcgis/rest/services>), which provide easy access to our layers for use in ArcGIS for Desktop or ArcGIS Online web maps. More detailed information on these services will be provided in the future, as we are exploring supporting KML and WMS more broadly.

Where do we download them?

There are two ways to access the layers. One is a table on our website; there you can see the list of layers and their formats. Simply click on the format link for the layer you want and download the zip file. <http://www.co.dakota.mn.us/HomeProperty/MappingServices/GISData/Pages/default.aspx>. The other way is by using our Free Maps and Data web map,

<http://gis.co.dakota.mn.us/Maps/FreeMaps.htm> Here you can zoom into an area of interest, click on the map and a list will open displaying all the preformatted PDF maps and the data layers for that location.

More to come!

Keep checking the list and web map every few weeks, as we will be continuing to release data to address the needs of the user community.

