

# Statewide Parcel Data Meeting

*Justin Morrill Conference Room, VT Life*

*Sept. 10, 2013*

**Present:** John Adams, DHCD; Leslie Pelch, VCGI; Joanna Grossman, AGFM; Dan Currier, CVRPC (and VAPDA); Jeff Briggs, DFPR; Ginger Anderson, DFPR; Stephanie Smith, VLCT; Ryan Cloutier, VTRANS (ROW); Elizabeth Hunt, Dept. of Taxes (UVA); Melissa Prindiville, ACCD; David Metraux, ACCD; Bill Johnson, Dept. of Taxes (PVR); Gary Smith, VTrans;

We all introduced ourselves and then went into a little more depth regarding why our organization had a specific business need for consistent, up to date, digital parcel data that meets the VT GIS Parcel Data Standard (i.e. includes span in order to facilitate joining to the grand list).

**Agency of Agriculture:** would like to be able to match point farm data with land ownership. Currently, the state's farms are not mapped and parcel data could help with this task.

**RPCs:** many planning functions are possible at municipal and regional level with parcel data, impossible without and less accurate with old data. Would like to help towns achieve a more accurate accounting of ownership and acreages.

**FPR:** more than half of the forestry UVA parcels are digitally mapped, but have not been updated. They have a variety of reporting needs as well as managing UVA forestry practices that require them to have protected land mapped. They will soon have a mapping forester position filled, funded by both the Tax Dept. and the Forest Service.

**VTrans ROW:** every construction project requires research of existing ROW and relevant land ownership as well as sometimes developing ROW. Currently spend a lot of time going to listers in each town to piece together ownership and boundary info. Ryan pointed out that he ALWAYS finds land owners being taxed for land that belongs to VTrans (or property not being taxed), every project. This highlights that one of the goals of this effort is equity. More accurate mapping will lead to more accurate and fair taxation. The data would be used on a daily basis by VTRANS staff. The state does not have a comprehensive idea of how much property it owns.

**UVA:** they are trying to build an online application right now. They need to refer to all information relevant to each UVA parcel all the time, so having digital access would save a lot of time. Currently are starting to look at digital forestry parcels on ANR atlas and Google Earth. They have issues with keeping track of parcels that have been kicked out of program (and aren't allowed to apply again for 5 years).

**ACCD:** relevant to all departments, but particularly in the planning/designation areas. Parcel data is used when determining if a parcel is part of a TIF district. Interested parties are required to submit digital parcel data.

**PVR and UVA:** Tax Dept. has an interest in improving the accuracy of the grand lists, and enhancing the analysis they do. There have been questions such as “how many UVA parcels cross town lines?” There are some legislators interested in addressing the issue of statewide parcel data creation/improvement.

### **General Discussion:**

Everyone agrees that being able to reliably join the Grand List data to the Parcel data is vitally important and useful for their business uses, mostly because they need ownership info. Surveyors and others physically need to go to individual town offices to get data – making Vermont one of the most challenging states to do business in.

Some concern was expressed that even if money was available, some towns would choose not to participate.

Leslie proposed that submission of up-to-date GIS parcel data that meets the VT GIS Parcel Data Standard should be a requirement, that the Tax Dept. should require it along with Grand List data. Bill Johnson agreed. Other requirements might include Act 250 permits and wastewater permits requiring submission of parcel data).

Leslie also shared a rough estimate of the cost to bring all town parcel data up to date and up to standard. **Please see attached spreadsheet.** Estimate is based on costs passed along by various mapping contractors, parcel status passed along by RPC GIS folks, and number of parcels based on 2012 Grand List data.

Various funding ideas started to pop up, perhaps related more to maintenance than an initial program: MPG program, why can't it allow parcel mapping; recording fees, subdivision fees; existing money provided to each town by tax dept. (\$8.50 per parcel) could be used for updates. Or perhaps this amount could be increased; property transfer tax...?

Melissa asks what are the implications for other information management systems within the town (CAMA, etc. )?

Stephanie suggested that MAYBE towns would be ok handing this responsibility to the state or RPCs?

Bill pointed out that the legislature is not in the mood to come up with money right now. He also suggested that we might want to link this idea with issues that are legislative priorities:

- Health
- Education (there's a link here!)
- Emergency management (link here as well!)
- UVA program

Bill also suggested that there could be issues related to the statutory definition of a parcel.

We briefly identified some other folks who are and are not in state government but who would benefit from this utopian parcel vision:

- Dept. of Emergency Management and Homeland Security
- Dept. of Public Safety
- Dept. of Health
- Realtors, Appraisers, Surveyors, Engineers, Planners, Regional Development Corps.,

**Very Preliminary Vision, subject to change!**

- A fund of money is available (equal to total amount needed? 50%?)
- Statutes related to Tax Dept. requirements upon towns will be changed to reflect that towns must provide GIS parcel data at some regular interval (annually or at a regular interval up to 3 years) and that data must reflect that year's grand list and must meet the VT GIS Parcel Data Standard.
- Towns can apply to (insert grant manager here) for an amount (determined in part by availability, in part by their status: no maps, paper map, cad data, shapefile data that needs to be updated and brought into compliance with the standard...)
- Towns enter into a contract with (RPC or VCGI...) that commits them to a process as well as a final product:
  - They will participate in training related to the RFP process, evaluating proposals, creating and implementing a contract, and payment schedule
  - They will actually create and put out an RFP, evaluate proposals with RPC staff, enter into a contract with a mapping firm, and receive a final product that includes GIS parcel data that meets the VT standard
  - They will develop (with VCGI or RPC staff) a realistic plan for keeping their data up to date (annually, or at an interval not to exceed...3 years?) that specifies how they will raise or save the necessary funds.
  - There will be a sign-off before they receive final funds
- Other policies, procedures, laws will be changed to allow more funds to be available to help towns with the cost of keeping parcel data up to date.

**Next Steps:**

All members of this group (plus a few who are not here today) will be asked to submit a description of why parcel data is important to their work flow/business process AND as much quantification of the cost of the current situation as compared to the savings of the ideal situation along with additional activities they could perform if the data was available. Leslie will put together a more pointed request in a few days...

All members of this group will think about whether there are other interest groups we haven't thought of yet and will pass along those ideas.

Leslie will:

Promote the idea of statewide consistent parcel data and a program to create/support when participating in events around the state.

Compile input from members of this group into a coherent case for the benefits of statewide parcel data.

Talk with VCGI E.D. about doing some sort of ROI analysis, perhaps just on major beneficiaries as identified above (UVA, VTrans, ANR, ACCD?)

Start talking with Tax Dept. and RPCs about how this could work?

Talk with Deb Brighton to gain ideas on how to promote this at the legislature?

Reach out to private sector constituencies.