



St Joseph County

Geographic Information Systems Department

(269) 467-5543

Fax (269) 467-5672

4/13/24

2023 Annual GIS Department Summary

The GIS Department continues to focus on the day-to-day data updates and maintenance while working on larger, long term projects as time permits. Following are a few of the 2023 accomplishments:

Notable Projects:

- Continued to streamline and automate as much of the GIS Department workload as possible, significantly reducing the time required to performed routine GIS maintenance activities.
- At the request of the GIS Director, in July, the GIS Department was reduced from 1 FTE to 0.5 FTE and the position contracted out. This saves the county \$60,000+/- annually while not appreciably impacting the quality of service provided.
- Released the Parcel Detail Map application on the Interactive Map Portal. This site contains a detailed parcel contours/elevation map and parcel dimensions map in downloadable .pdf format for every parcel in the county. There are currently over 56,000 maps on this site with more to come.
- Made many corrections and improvements to the E-911 dispatch GIS database to bring it up to Next Generation 911 Standards (NG911) and integrated with the new State-wide NG911 system.
- Worked with Equalization to develop a new system for the county appraiser to map and track land type changes for equalization study purposes.
- Worked with E911, Mottville and Constantine Townships identifying private roads that should be named and addressed. Developed new address ranges and road names to be implemented in 2024.

Regular Housekeeping Activities:

- Continued migration from ArcGIS to QGIS as the standard desktop GIS software within the county. Supported QGIS distribution into the Equalization Department. QGIS is a free, open-source software. Switching to QGIS saves \$7,500-\$10,000 annually in licensing fees compared to the previous ArcGIS software.
- Maintained the FREE St Joseph County GIS data download service, which was used by 23 organizations in 2023.
- Remapped 968 parcels to within +/- 3 foot accuracy; most are within +/- 1 foot. Nearly 85% of the county parcels have been remapped.
- Worked with Equalization and local assessors to map over 100 new parcel combinations/splits/boundary changes.
- Performed the annual tax map updates and reprinted hundreds of maps.
- Processed 175 new or re-issued property addresses (up 30% from 2022).
- Performed regular data updates to the Fetch and Interactive Map Portal GIS public access systems.
- Acted as the Remonumentation Grant Administrator. This includes coordinating with the County Surveyor to prepare the initial grant proposal, attending Remonumentation project meetings, compiling and entering Land Corner Recordation Certificate information into the state database, and submitting a final Completion Report.
- Created many maps and reports to support county departments and external partners.

1st Q 2024 Sneak Peek

- Presented "Uses of Artificial Intelligence in St Joseph County" at last week's Leadership Meeting. AI is currently being leveraged heavily by the GIS Department and we explored potential uses in other areas. This will be a big focus for 2024.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Jerry Happel, GIS Director/Address Administrator