1/7/2022

2021 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 2021 accomplishments:

- Migrated from ArcGIS to QGIS as the standard GIS software within the county. 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.
- Implemented the new FREE St Joseph County GIS download service, which was used by over 50 organizations in 2021. This is a surprisingly high number compared to the number of organizations that were willing to purchase and use County GIS data in the past. The two most commonly stated uses of the data were 1) site location analysis for new businesses and 2) reference data for new utility work (mostly telecommunications).
- Remapped nearly 2000 parcels to within +/- 3 foot accuracy. Most are within +/- 1 foot. As of 12/31/21, the GIS Department has remapped 74% of the county parcels (20,792 of the 28,308 parcels). Included in this effort is remapping numerous subdivision lots and plats. Also continued to update related section corner data.
- This year, the GIS Department took on the annual parcel combination/split/boundary change mapping tasks formerly processed by the Equalization Department. As of 12/31/21, the GIS Department had processed nearly 100 new parcel combinations/splits/boundary changes.
- Performed the annual tax map updates and reprinted hundreds of maps.
- Coordinated with 4-H Youth Council to have them sponsor the new 2022 Plat Book as a fund raiser.
- Made many corrections and improvements to the E-911 dispatch database.
- Prototyped online application analyzing the geographic distribution of E-911 calls.
- Researched and chose new internet mapping software to develop custom, need-specific applications for a number of departments in 2022.
- Processed 176 new or re-issued property addresses. Developed new process for issuing new addresses in conjunction with the local units of governments.
- Performed regular updates to the Fetch GIS public access system. The Fetch system continues to be used at high rate of approximately 500 queries each work day by people looking for property and tax information.
- 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.

Upcoming Projects for 2022:
- Continue transition from ArcGIS to QGIS as the primary GIS software used in the County.
- Utilize new Internet Mapping Software tools (MANGO) to develop custom internet mapping applications specific to the needs of a number of departments.
- Develop new Internet-based procedures for accepting applications for new property addresses.
- Develop automatic on-line Address Verification tool.
- Continue to populate new Survey & Map index database application.
- Continue parcel remapping project.
- Work with 4-H Youth Council to develop 2022 Plat Book.
- Add new layers to fetch (elevations, parcel dimensions, etc).
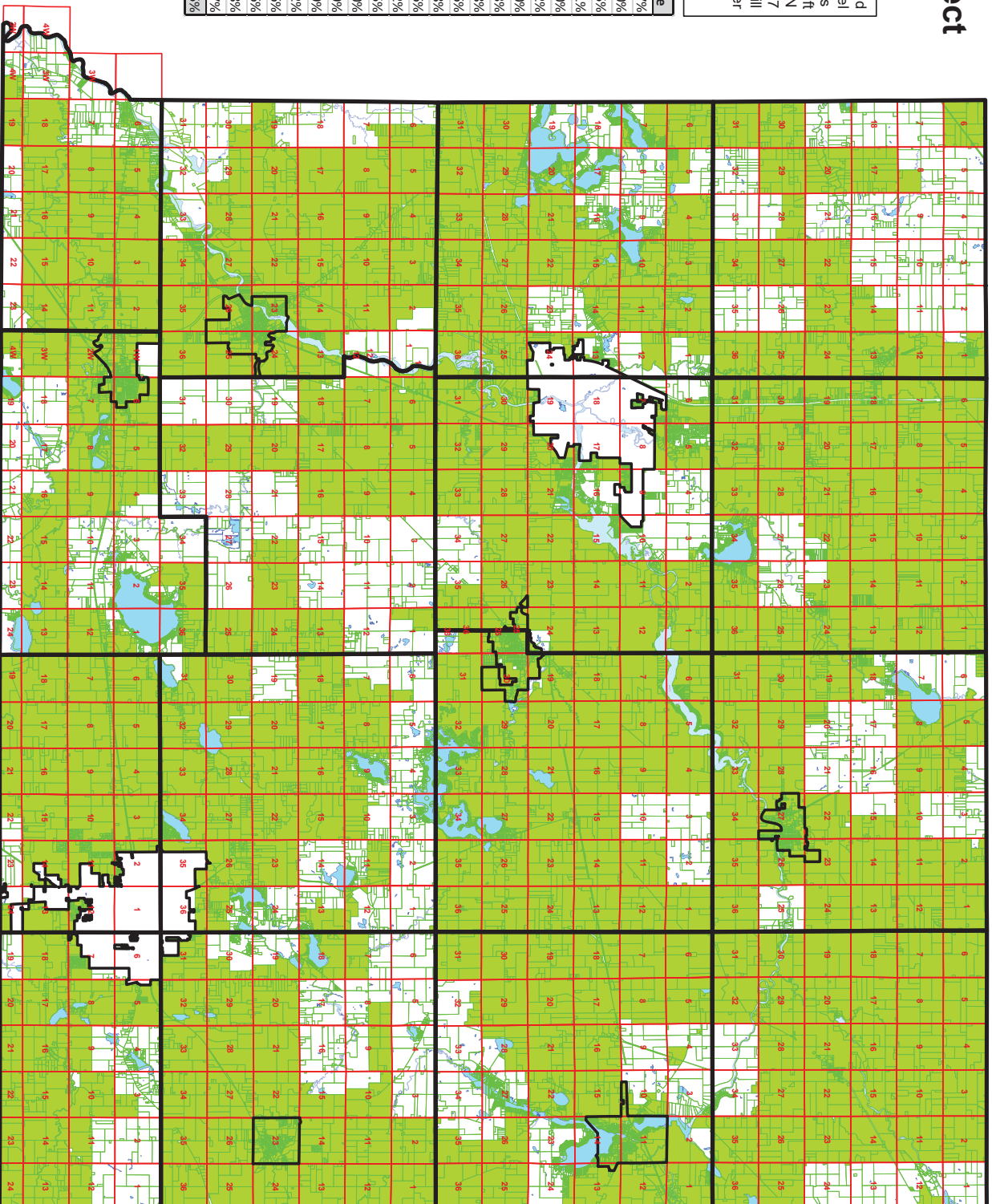
Let me know if you have any questions.

Jerry Happel
GIS Director/Address Administrator
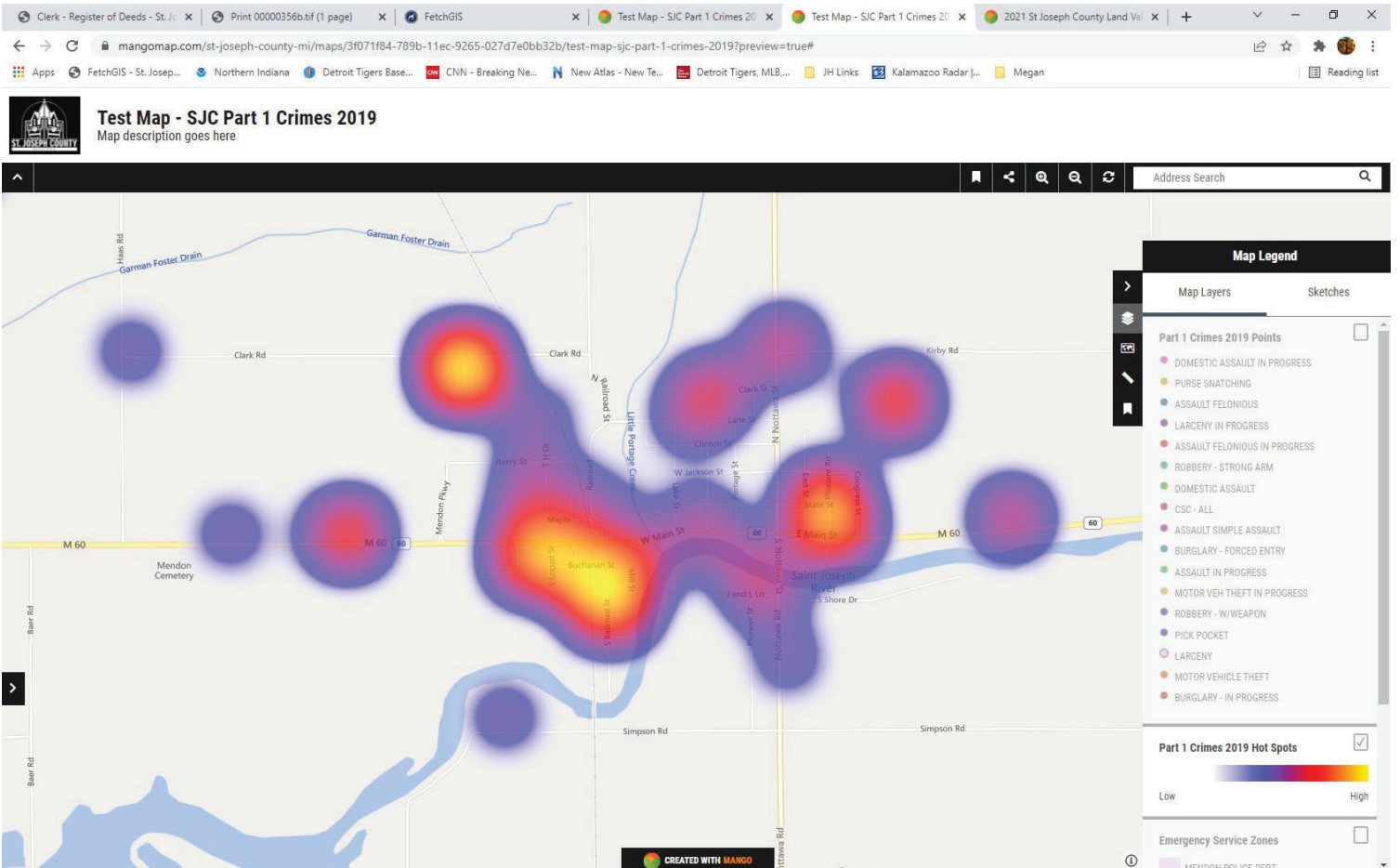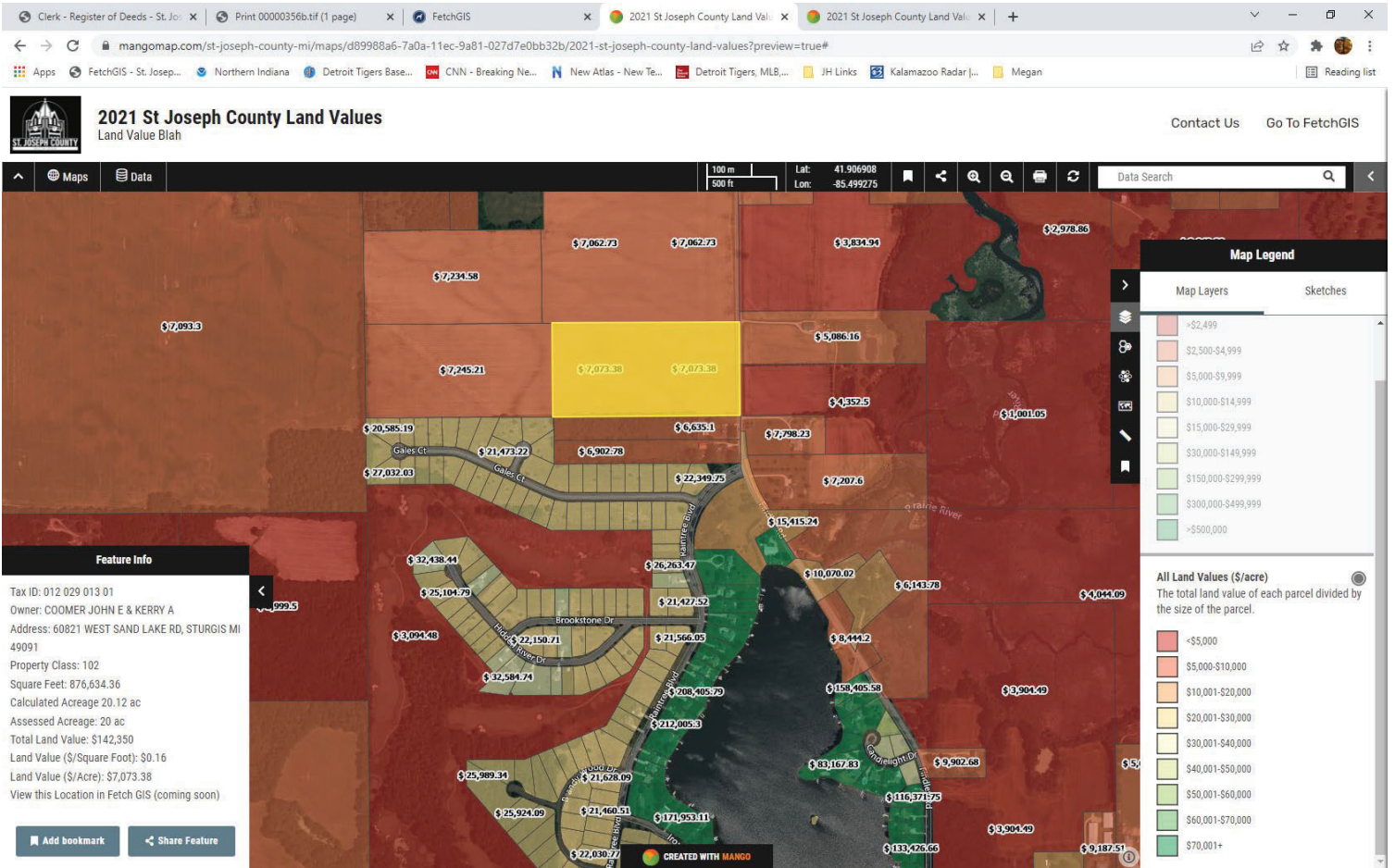St Joseph County, MI

St Joseph County
Parcel Remapping Project
Status Update

The St Joseph County GIS Department has committed to significantly improving the accuracy of the parcel data within the county. As of 3/7/22, 21,096 parcels have been remapped to within a minimum of +/- 3 ft accuracy. The areas remapped are shaded GREEN on the map. This represents 74.5% of the 28,327 county maintained parcels. The remapping effort will continue as additional parcels. The remapping effort will coordinates are identified.

Unit	Parcels	Remapped	% Complete
Burr Oak Twp	1,177	809	68.7%
Burr Oak VLG	484	484	100.0%
Centreville	573	570	99.5%
Colon TWP	1,696	1,020	60.1%
Colon VLG	825	825	100.0%
Constantine TWP	1,315	1,133	86.2%
Constantine VLG	793	793	100.0%
Fabius	2,929	1,882	64.3%
Fawn River	885	653	73.8%
Florence	823	482	58.6%
Flowerfield	1,100	691	62.8%
Leonidas	983	782	79.6%
Lockport	2,278	1,508	66.2%
Mendon TWP	1,163	831	71.5%
Mendon VLG	514	514	100.0%
Mottville	975	594	60.9%
Nottawa	1,964	1,903	96.9%
Park	1,766	1,452	82.2%
Sherman	2,216	1,321	59.6%
Sturgis TWP	967	944	97.6%
White Pigeon TWP	2,151	1,264	58.8%
White Pigeon VLG	750	643	85.7%
TOTAL	28,327	21,098	74.5%

3/7/22

N

2021 St Joseph County Land Values
Land Value Blah

Contact Us   Go To FetchGIS

Maps   Data

100 m
500 ft

Lat: 41.906908
Lon: -85.499275

Data Search

Map Legend

Map Layers   Sketches

>$2,499
$2,500-$4,999
$5,000-$9,999
$10,000-$14,999
$15,000-$29,999
$30,000-$149,999
$150,000-$299,999
$300,000-$499,999
>$500,000

All Land Values ($/acre)
The total land value of each parcel divided by the size of the parcel.

<$5,000
$5,000-$10,000
$10,001-$20,000
$20,001-$30,000
$30,001-$40,000
$40,001-$50,000
$50,001-$60,000
$60,001-$70,000
$70,001+

Feature Info

Tax ID: 012 029 013 01
Owner: COOMER JOHN E & KERRY A
Address: 60821 WEST SAND LAKE RD, STURGIS MI 49091
Property Class: 102
Square Feet: 876,634.36
Calculated Acreage 20.12 ac
Assessed Acreage: 20 ac
Total Land Value: $142,350
Land Value ($/Square Foot): $0.16
Land Value ($/Acre): $7,073.38
View this Location in Fetch GIS (coming soon)

Add bookmark   Share Feature

CREATED WITH MANGO

Test Map - SJC Part 1 Crimes 2019
Map description goes here

Address Search

Map Legend

Map Layers   Sketches

Part 1 Crimes 2019 Points

- DOMESTIC ASSAULT IN PROGRESS
- PURSE SNATCHING
- ASSAULT FELONIOUS
- LARCENY IN PROGRESS
- ASSAULT FELONIOUS IN PROGRESS
- ROBBERY - STRONG ARM
- DOMESTIC ASSAULT
- CSC - ALL
- ASSAULT SIMPLE ASSAULT
- BURGLARY - FORCED ENTRY
- ASSAULT IN PROGRESS
- MOTOR VEH THEFT IN PROGRESS
- ROBBERY - W/WEAPON
- PICK POCKET
- LARCENY
- MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT
- BURGLARY - IN PROGRESS

Part 1 Crimes 2019 Hot Spots

Low   High

Emergency Service Zones

MENDON POLICE DEPT

CREATED WITH MANGO
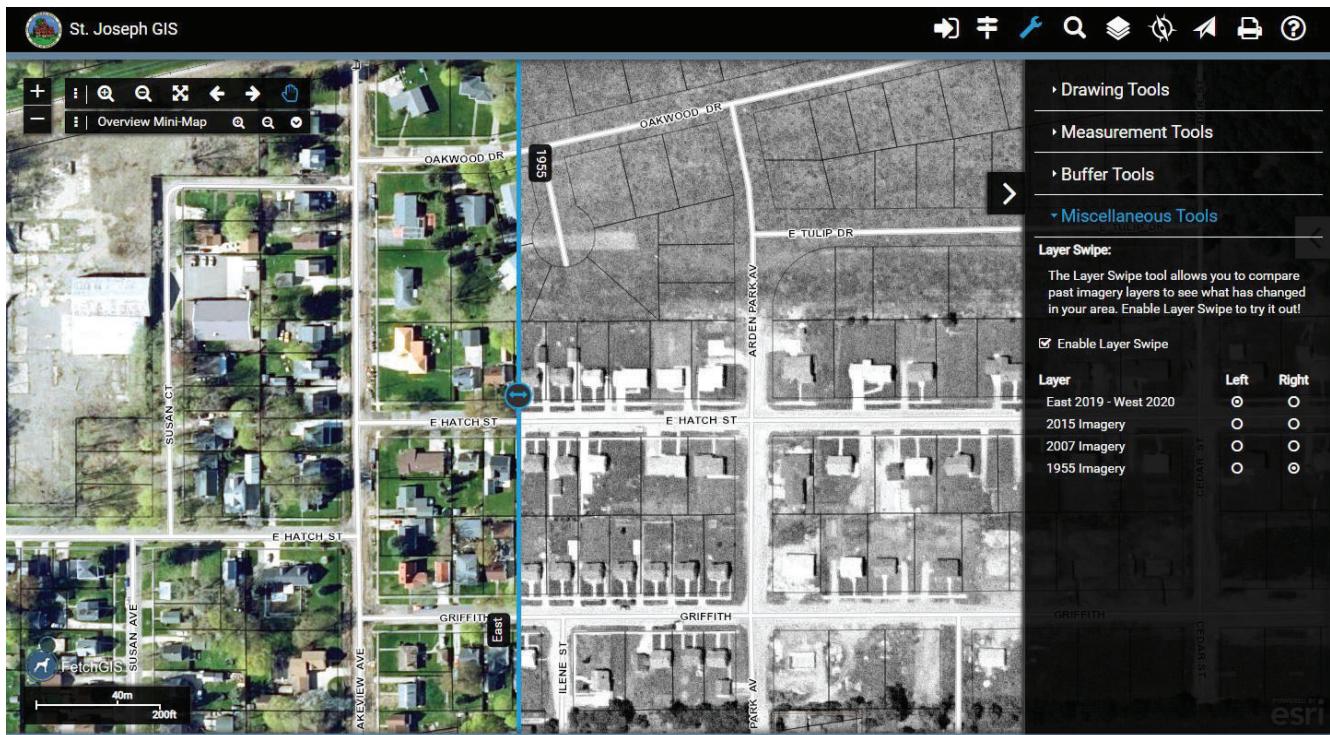
4/15/21

----FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-----

Free County-Wide 1955 Air Photos Now Available

The St. Joseph County Geographic Information Systems Department has announced the availability of county-wide vintage aerial photography from 1955. These black and white photos, along with other county land information, can be seen on the free St, Joseph County Fetch GIS app.

"Vintage air photos are a great resource to track changes in land use and development over time," says Jerry Happel, St. Joseph County GIS Director. "The County has changed quite a lot over the last 66 years, and now you can clearly see those changes by comparing the 1955 photos with the 2020 photos using the "Swipe" tool on Fetch GIS."

Happel says the vintage photos can also sometimes help his office clear up property boundary confusion when an older property description refers to a point or location that has changed or disappeared over time. "For example, many properties are defined by a border with a stream or river that may have changed course since 1955. Seeing the changes on the photos helps us clear up a lot of issues."

The photos also provide a good historical record of St. Joseph County. According to Happel, "Many of the original homesteads that are now long gone were still clearly visible in the 1955 photos. Seeing what your property or hometown looked like from the air in 1955 can give you a better perspective on local history."

The USDA Farm Service Agency took air photographs of much of the country during the 1950's. Over 300 individual air photos covering all of St. Joseph County were taken over several sunny days in July, 1955. These 300 original photos had to be scanned, edge-matched, and "stitched" together to create the seamless, county-wide photo as seen on Fetch GIS. Over 1500 control points that were visible on both the 1955 and 2020 air photos had to be identified and matched up.

"This was an interesting side-project that we have been working on with Professor Gerald Barkley at Glen Oaks Community College in our spare time for the last couple of years," says Happel. "It's good to finally be able to get these out there to the public in an easy-to-use format like Fetch GIS."

So, what about these 1955 photos surprised Happel the most? "Trees," he says. "It seems counterintuitive, but it appears that in some areas there are actually more woodlots in the county today than in 1955. While it's true that a large number of the old fence rows and individual trees have been removed over the years, many areas of marginal farmland that were once logged, cleared for pasture, or farmed using smaller equipment have now reverted back to woods."

To view the photos, along with other county land information, visit the free St. Joseph County Fetch GIS app at https://www.stjosephcountymi.org/landresources_fetchgis.php.