

## Brown County Survey Index

Wisconsin statutes require that copies of land surveys be turned in to the county surveyor. The statutes then require the county surveyor to index and place the surveys on file as public records. Surveys creating land divisions must be recorded with the Register of Deeds. State statutes and Administrative Code require surveys be related to the land survey system it is in by ties to corners of the land survey system. Combining land claims due to early settlement of the area with the rectangular section, township and range system result in Brown County having multiple land survey systems.

Brown County has over 35,000 survey maps on file. Over the years various systems have put into place to index surveys. With the diverse types of land survey systems in Brown County, maps have been the most efficient way to index surveys. Different index numbering systems have been developed and used depending on the size of the drawing, type of survey and in which land survey system the survey is located resulting in 14 distinct indexing systems. In addition to all the index systems surveys were drawn on available plat maps. Scales of those maps ranged from 1" = 1000' to 1" = 100'. When the maps became cluttered or the paper wore away from use, the surveys would have to be transcribed onto new paper maps. In 1999 a digital framework of the county's land survey systems had been developed and the digital parcel mapping was far enough along that new surveys received by the county surveyor were drawn into an AutoCAD drawing and text attributes were stored in a Microsoft Access database. As new surveys were received they were entered into the digital system. This moved the index from being paper map based to digital but no effort was made to consolidate and simplify the different indexing systems. Entering surveys already on file was done as time permitted and approximately 2/3, by area, of the county has been back indexed.

A June 2011 LEAN Kaizen event provided the direction to create a more efficient indexing system. The Kaizen also provided a formalized framework for developing and implementing the indexing system. It was decided to develop the new system in ArcGIS format. Mapping and attribute entry is done at the same time, cutting several steps out of the old indexing system. In June of 2013 Brown County's Land Information Council approved Wisconsin Land Information Program funds to hire a contractor to back index surveys.

Starting in late 2013 the GIS/Land Records Coordinator began converting AutoCAD/Access data and reading it into ArcGIS. All the information that had been entered into AutoCAD was successfully brought across to the new platform. Using spreadsheets provided by the Register of Deeds recording information was linked to subdivision boundaries in the Property Listing parcel mapping and that information was uploaded into the index. By early February over 27,000 surveys were in the index. As data was being loaded into the index the GIS Technician created the Web Mapping Application to make the index available on mobile devices such as smart phones and tablets. Selecting surveys in the Web Mapping Application will allow users to see and print copies of the surveys. Miscellaneous surveys filed with the County Surveyor are accessed with a hyperlink while documents recorded in the Register of Deeds are accessed by going through the Fidar Technologies Tapestry application.

Currently, testing of the web application is underway by a limited number of users. Already the first enhancement was made when the GIS/Land Records Coordinator attached the Certified Land Corner records to the web application, making coordinates and tie sheets for over 2,300 corners available in the same application. Rollout of the application to the public by about the end of February is anticipated.