



Legislative Priority: Continued Support for Statewide Mapping Initiatives

WLIA's Request

- Support initiatives and funding for existing and emerging statewide mapping initiatives that build upon the success of the statewide parcel mapping project.
- To support efforts to provide a state repository to house state and locally developed Geographic Information System (GIS) data.
- Additional support and funding will streamline efforts, allowing local and state agencies to provide a better return on investment for the public and adapt to future needs.

Background

Wisconsin counties have a history of producing high-quality, timely, and accurate GIS data for their respective jurisdictions. These GIS datasets are primarily designed to support a range of county operations such as law enforcement, health and human services, and land conservation. Currently, the Wisconsin Land Information Program (WLIP) funds the creation and maintenance of individual county land data but does not have statewide integration.

The Problem

Wisconsin lacks initiatives and funding to develop statewide mapping data from high quality local data already developed. The State of Wisconsin does not have a central state GIS repository or one state agency to support this initiative. Prior to the statewide parcel map project, finding land ownership details meant sifting through numerous county and municipal sources, which was inefficient and costly.

Case Studies

Next Generation 911 (NG911)

Upgrading from Enhanced 911 to NG911, counties were required to make critical updates to their GIS data for the successful deployment of the new emergency response system. However, a lack of county staff and resources made it difficult to update in a timely manner. WLIA collaborated with the Department of Military Affairs and state legislators to create the NG911 GIS grant program, which began in 2022. Sustainable funding for NG911 is integral to maintaining and aggregating local agency data, such as address points, road centerlines, and other critical data into publicly available statewide data and maps.

Statewide Mapping

The 2012 Deer Trustee Report highlighted Wisconsin's need for a seamless statewide mapping system for deer management, resulting in statutory directives through Wisconsin statutes [59.72](#) & [16.967](#). The Wisconsin Statewide Parcel Initiative successfully used county data to build statewide maps, proving it could be done. However, the funding and focus mostly covered property boundaries, land survey monuments, roads, and addresses, with less attention on other important areas. Progress has been made in the last decade, but more funding and better coordination are still needed to improve the accessibility of quality statewide maps. Additionally, there needs to be a single state agency responsible for aggregating local data and serve as a central GIS data repository for the state.

Municipal Boundaries and Wards

Municipal wards and boundaries are the foundation for drawing county supervisory, state legislative, and congressional districts. During redistricting, municipalities must define wards based on population and geography for effective election planning. Inconsistent and outdated data formats, annexation activity, and varied local resources make it difficult to maintain accurate municipal and ward boundaries, often resulting in mapping conflicts and challenges for election administration. Wisconsin has significantly improved boundary and ward data per Wisconsin statute [5.15\(4\)\(br\)](#), which now utilizes GIS data for planning, redistricting, and public transparency.