



NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY LAUNCHES REDESIGNED GIS MAPPING SERVICE, NEW OPEN DATA PORTAL

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO – St. Charles County's Information Systems Department has launched a redesigned Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Mapping Service and a new Geospatial Open Data Portal to better serve the needs of St. Charles County residents. Both services enable users to access map-based data and research information about the county.

"GIS data is a foundation for St. Charles County, or any government, when making decisions," says Mark Duewell, Manager of GIS Services. "Nearly any service provided by a local government for its citizens can be mapped, and analyzed for improvement. We are excited to have these tools available for citizens so they can research information and get to know their community better."

The redesigned GIS Mapping Service is improved in several ways. It is in Javascript, which easily allows for future enhancements. The navigation of the site also is enhanced with better visibility of tools and widgets and increased speed. Coming soon is a mobile application that can be easily accessed on a phone or tablet.

"We redesigned this service with improvements suggested by a variety of stakeholders," says Duewell. "We want to make certain the service is more accessible and friendlier for all users."

The GIS Mapping Service, available at <http://map.sccmo.org>, can be used in a variety of ways.

- The site automatically opens to a County-wide map that has county and municipal boundaries and jurisdictions labeled. This allows users to better understand the layout and landscape of the county. Municipalities are color-coded and unincorporated areas are in a single color. Users can zoom in to see roads and other thoroughfares in detail.
- When searching for a home or business property in the area, users can access assessment and parcel data by simply entering the address of a location. The service's new Google Street View widget can be used to see the latest photo of an area.
- Residents can learn more about the county through various selections available under the "Layers" option on the mapping service. Available data includes voting districts, County Council districts, boundaries for school districts and utility service providers, zoning information, park trails, physical features and topography, and more. Maps with the selected data can be printed on a home or office printer.

Earlier this fall, Information Systems launched a new GIS site for its Geospatial Open Data Portal:

<http://gis.sccmo.opendata.arcgis.com/>. The portal allows users to access datasets that GIS Services uses to create its online GIS Mapping Service and other maps. Data can be downloaded as a spreadsheet (CSV file) and in computerized mapping files called shapefiles or Keyhole Markup Language (KML) files. This service is free.

"This data is being used by an increasingly larger range of everyday professionals and students whose skills allow them to use GIS datasets," says Duewell. "It saves them a phone call, an email or a visit to our offices for the data. They also can 'slice and dice' the information, which leads to new perspectives, new answers and new questions. This opens up more

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possibilities for government to interact with the community and improve our services.”

GIS Services encourages the public and business community to provide feedback about these new and redesigned services. “We are eager to hear about ideas and suggestions for improvement,” says Simon Huang, Director of Information Systems. “The purpose of these sites is to take local, state and federal data and make it easily accessible and usable for our citizens.”

For questions or to provide feedback about St. Charles County’s GIS Mapping Service and Open Data Portal, email gisservices@sccmo.org.

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