Government Matters

In This Issue

Public Works and City Clerk's Office Collaborate on Election Day Planning with GIS

Street Sweeping and Construction No Longer Conflict with Polling Location Parking

By Jennifer Gómez, GIS Analyst II, City of Long Beach

The City of Long Beach, California, is using GIS to coordinate street construction and street sweeping activities around polling locations on Election Day. Through this proactive approach, administrative costs of elections are reduced and the voting public is better served. In the process, GIS has also proven to be an effective tool for better communication among city departments.

The City Clerk's Office is responsible for election administration and works to foster a spirit of cooperation. To that end, its staff decided to request the assistance of the Public Works Department to achieve its directive of conducting all elections in an efficient and accurate manner as mandated by law. In Long Beach, the Public Works Department GIS Section is charged with the creation and maintenance of a variety of geographic data including information related to centerlines, hardscapes, refuse collection, street sweeping, sidewalk and street improvements, bikeways, and bus routes.

Like the City Clerk's Office, the Public Works Department wants to use its resources to improve and enhance operations within the city and ultimately benefit its citizenry. Widening its positive impact on the community, the GIS Section now provides the City Clerk's Office with valuable information about street maintenance and construction that could interfere with election-related activity at polling locations. With this coordination, voters and poll workers have a more positive experience on Election Day.

Smooth Operations

On Election Day, polling volunteers generally drive to their polling locations and work from opening to closing. Historically, a number of poll workers are ticketed for blocking street sweeping because they are often unfamiliar with the area or may be unable to leave the polling location to move their vehicles. Although
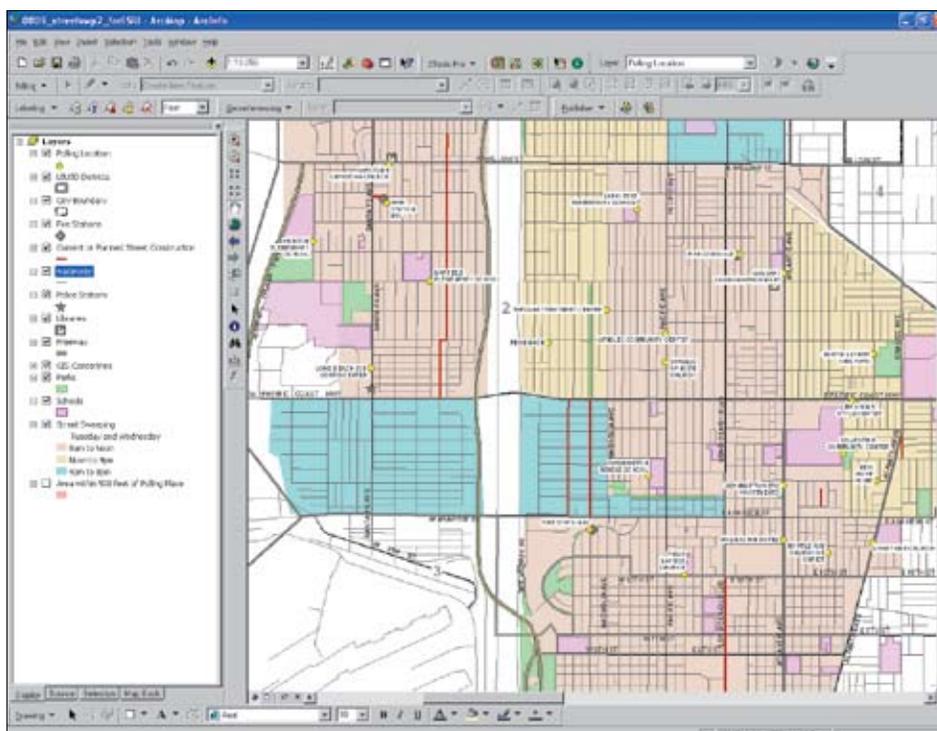
Yellow circles and red lines on the map represent polling locations and current or planned street construction, respectively. Shaded areas symbolize street cleaning times on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Public Safety Log Newsletter

ESRI recently launched *Public Safety Log,* a newsletter designed for public safety professionals in emergency management—emergency medical services (EMS), fire, homeland security, and law enforcement agencies. The publication will include real-world case studies, the latest ESRI GIS software information, a schedule of industry events, user group information, and software training updates. It will also provide insights about GIS for crime and investigation analysis, community policing, public information, resource tracking and management, fire deployment analysis, incident analysis, fire prevention, homeland security event mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery, and much more.

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ESRI Online

Listen to New Podcasts

Visit www.esri.com/podcasts to see the latest Speaker and Instructional Series podcasts. Here's a look at what you'll find:

- **Instructional Series**

  Understanding the ArcGIS Desktop Applications: Synthesizing ArcCatalog, ArcMap, and ArcToolbox

  Learn how to use ArcCatalog, ArcMap, and ArcToolbox together in a simple project. This episode will walk you through the creation of a map—from data to cartography.

- **Speaker Series—Interviews with ESRI Users**

  2008 ArcGIS Server Code Challenge: Justin Burns

  Justin Burns, GIS coordinator with St. Claire County in Port Huron, Michigan, talks about his ArcGIS Server Code Challenge entry, Sign Inventory Mobile Application.

- **Speaker Series—Interviews with ESRI Business Partners**

  Geo-Visus, New ESRI Business Partner

  Martin Copping, vice president of operations at Geo-Visus, a new ESRI business partner, describes the ArcGIS Server and ArcGIS Mobile software-based services and solutions his company provides.

- **Speaker Series—Interviews with ESRI Staff**

  2008/2013 Demographic Data Update

  Lynn Wombold, chief demographer and manager of ESRI's data development team, discusses the 2008/2013 demographic data update changes, trends, and methodologies.

  Business Analyst Online for Economic Development

  Christopher Thomas, government industry solutions manager at ESRI, discusses the benefits that Business Analyst Online, ESRI's Web-based analysis tool for on-demand reports and map generation, provides to economic development planners.

Learn about the NAVTEQ Street Data ELA Program

Leading data provider NAVTEQ is offering a Small Municipal and County Street Data Enterprise License Agreement (ELA) to accompany ESRI's ELA program for small governments in the United States. Both programs are for governments serving populations of 100,000 or less. Visit www.esri.com/smallgovela for more information.

Get Some No-Cost Training

Recently, Christopher Thomas, government industry solutions manager, and Simon Thompson, commercial industry solutions manager, recorded a training seminar for executives, managers, and other decision makers. The one-hour seminar, GIS for Managers, covers basic GIS concepts and applications and

addresses the business advantages of adopting a GIS solution. Visit www.esri.com/ts to listen to this training seminar.

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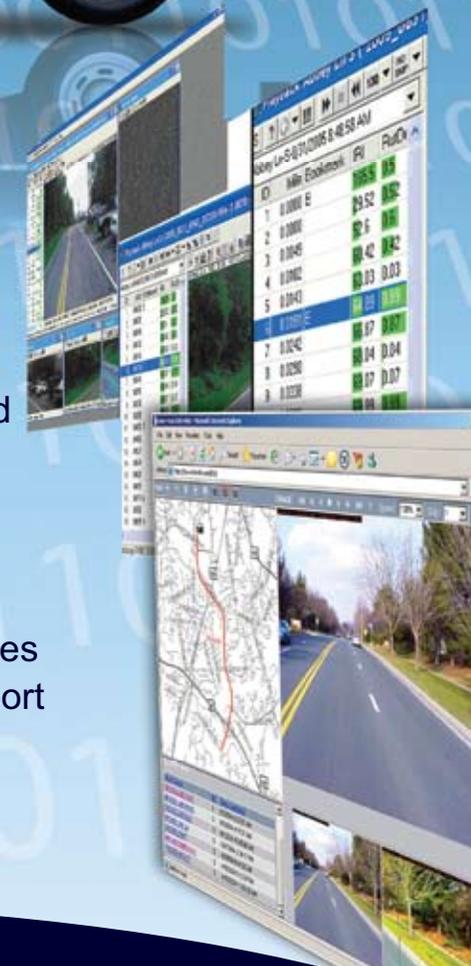
The 2008 Demographic State of the United States

Households are changing, aging, struggling, and retiring. How do these changes affect government agencies?

Changes in the U.S. population, diversity, income, housing, and economy based on 2008 demographic data trends will impact how government agencies respond to current needs. They also affect the agencies' ability to provide the correct services in the best locations with appropriate messaging that will assist the most people. What is the demographic state of the United States in 2008?

Population changes show one irrefutable fact: the populace as a whole is aging. The median age of the U.S. population has increased to 36.8 years, more than 1.5 years since 2000. Baby boomers aged 62 now qualify for Social Security benefits (the first wave of the "Silver Tsunami," as the 78-million-strong baby boom cohort is sometimes called) and are approaching retirement.
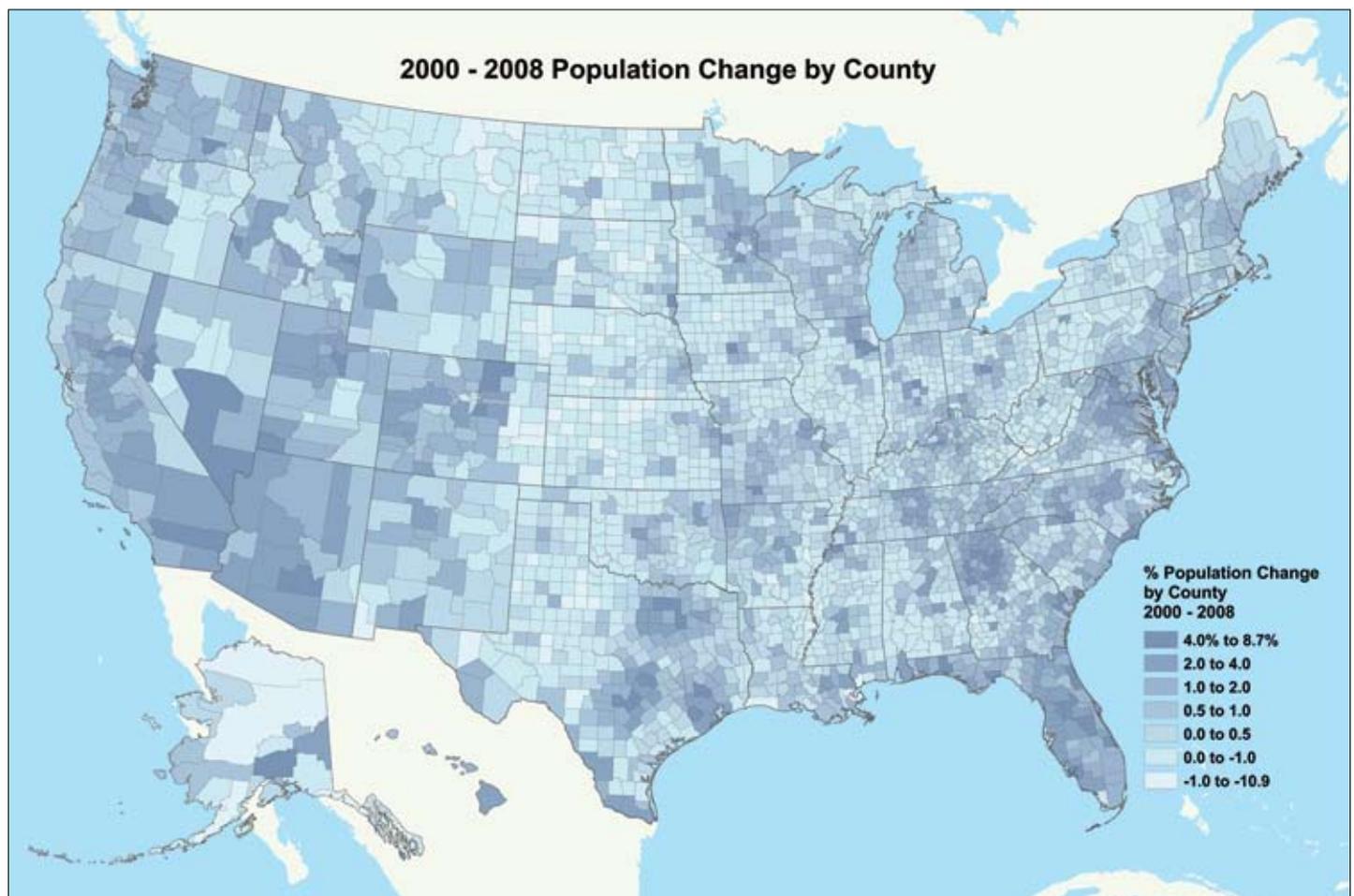
Government agencies must understand and manage issues relating to seniors such as providing conveniently located senior centers; managing the impact of more seniors who require urgent care facilities and hospitals; and furnishing more affordable, accessible public transportation. All agencies must consider the huge influence of the baby boom cohort moving into retirement.

In addition to aging, the "face" of the U.S. population is changing—the U.S. diversity index is now 60, a 1 percent annual increase in the index since 2000, when the diversity index was 54.6. As expected, the most diverse states are California, New Mexico, and Texas. The Hispanic population in 2008 is 47.6 million, now more than 15 percent of the total U.S. population. The 2013 Hispanic population is predicted to be 56.6 million, growing at a rate of more than 3.5 percent annually. The Asian population from 2000 to 2008 shows growth of more than 3.5 percent annually, and the growth rate of the multiracial population is 3.3 percent annually.

Providing the right services to increasingly diverse populations is an ongoing challenge for government agencies. Crafting culturally acceptable messages about services to language-isolated populations or those who are intimidated by authority must be handled with

2000 - 2008 Population Change by County

% Population Change by County 2000 - 2008

- 4.0% to 8.7%
- 2.0 to 4.0
- 1.0 to 2.0
- 0.5 to 1.0
- 0.0 to 0.5
- 0.0 to -1.0
- -1.0 to -10.9

continued from page 4

The 2008 Demographic State of the United States

sensitivity and tact. Government staff are now required to be more conversant in multiple languages to properly understand and assist those who are new to the United States. Serving the needs of different races and ethnicities also strains local and regional school systems that must provide additional services to any students who are not fluent in English or who have specific religious considerations.

Even though the overall population is quickly becoming more diverse, population growth has slowed pervasively in most areas; more than two-thirds of U.S. counties have noted a slowdown. A declining population means the loss of skilled workers who move to other areas in search of employment, shrinking sales tax revenues from fewer shoppers, worsening schools, and an area that is less attractive to prospective businesses and residents. In these declining areas, government agencies must juggle increased demand for services with reduced resources.

However, there is growth in some areas of the United States. Suburbs around major metro-politan areas continue to be the fastest-growing areas including

- Flagler County, Florida
- Kendall County, Illinois (Chicago metro area)
- Rockwall County, Texas (Dallas-Fort Worth metro area)
- Loudoun County, Virginia (Washington, D.C., metro area)
- Pinal County, Arizona (Phoenix metro area)

The fastest-growing ZIP Codes are

- 93106—Santa Barbara, California
- 89084—North Las Vegas, Nevada
- 06349—Groton, Connecticut
- 89179—Las Vegas, Nevada
- 89141—Las Vegas, Nevada

Income in some areas continues to climb. At $115,800, the county with the highest median income is Douglas County, Colorado. Other counties with median household income topping the $100,000 mark are Loudoun and Fairfax counties, Virginia ($114,500 and

$108,200, respectively), and Hunterton County, New Jersey ($109,200). The U.S. median disposable income for 2008 is $43,400.

Doom and gloom pervade the current housing market. Falling home prices, rising foreclosures, and increasing vacancy rates paint a bleak picture nearly everywhere; very few areas have been spared from the impact of the falling housing market. It is clear that the housing market is in a downturn; foreclosures were up 112 percent for the first quarter of 2008, compared to the first quarter of 2007. The 2008 median home value is now $183,000, down 4.8 percent from 2007. The median home value in 2007–2008 declined in more than 73 percent of U.S. counties. Vacant units have increased by more than 7 percent; the total vacancy rate is now 10.5 percent. The rate of homeownership is also declining.

All levels of government are challenged to minimize the impact of this housing downturn. Federal agencies are attempting to assist distressed homeowners with mortgage extensions by refinancing mortgages into fixed rates with
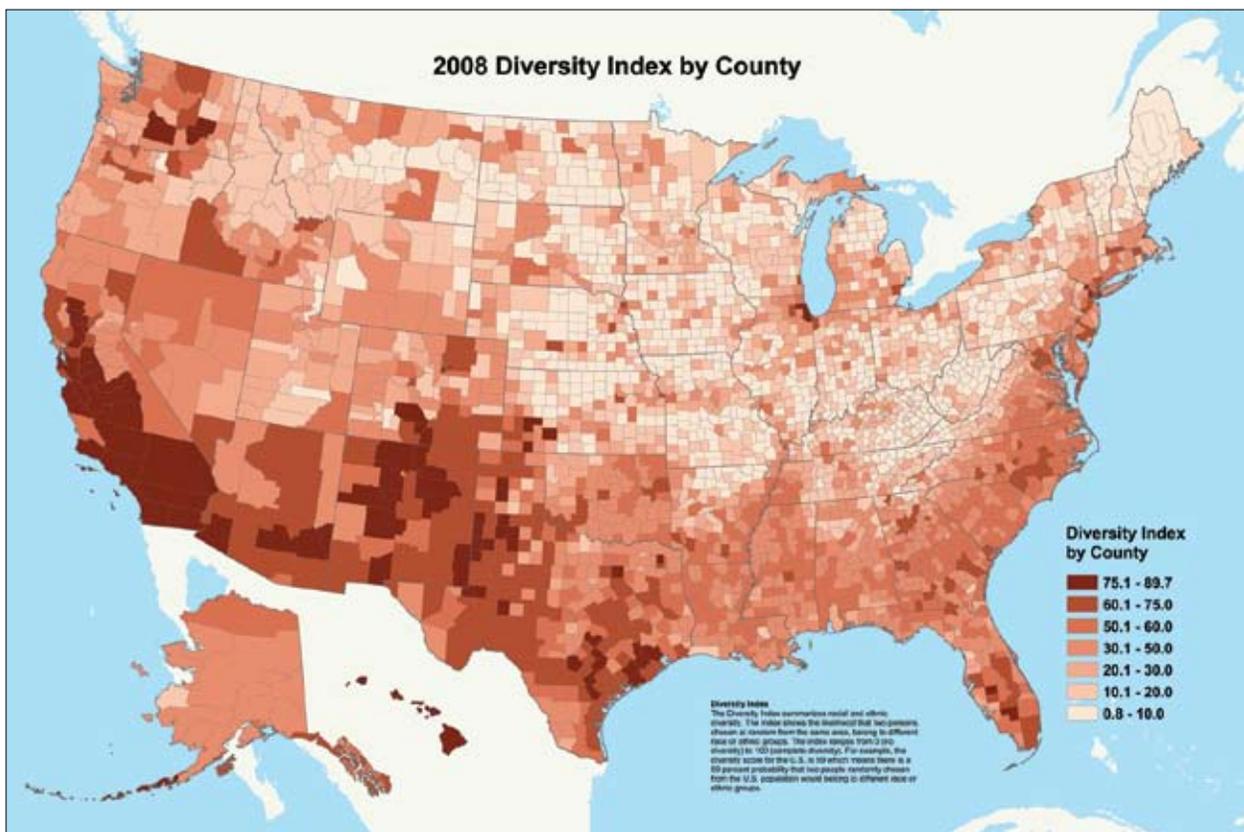
lower payments and providing free mortgage counseling. Regional and local governments must keep neighborhoods from further decline by maintaining foreclosed properties, assisting homeowners with buyouts, and helping economic development staffs market communities to prospective businesses and residents. Working with local residential Realtors to attract home buyers by offering favorable prices is another method of preventing foreclosed properties from negatively impacting neighborhoods.

What does this situation mean for the economy? The housing slump and credit crunch, coupled with rising food and fuel prices, are adversely affecting economic growth. Job growth is sluggish, the unemployment rate is up to 6.9 percent, and the labor force suffered a loss of nearly 600,000 jobs last year. The rate of labor force participation is declining due to retirement or discouraged workers who have stopped searching for employment. Faced with these belt-tightening budget challenges, government agencies must work smarter with reduced resources while providing services to increasing numbers of people who require assistance.
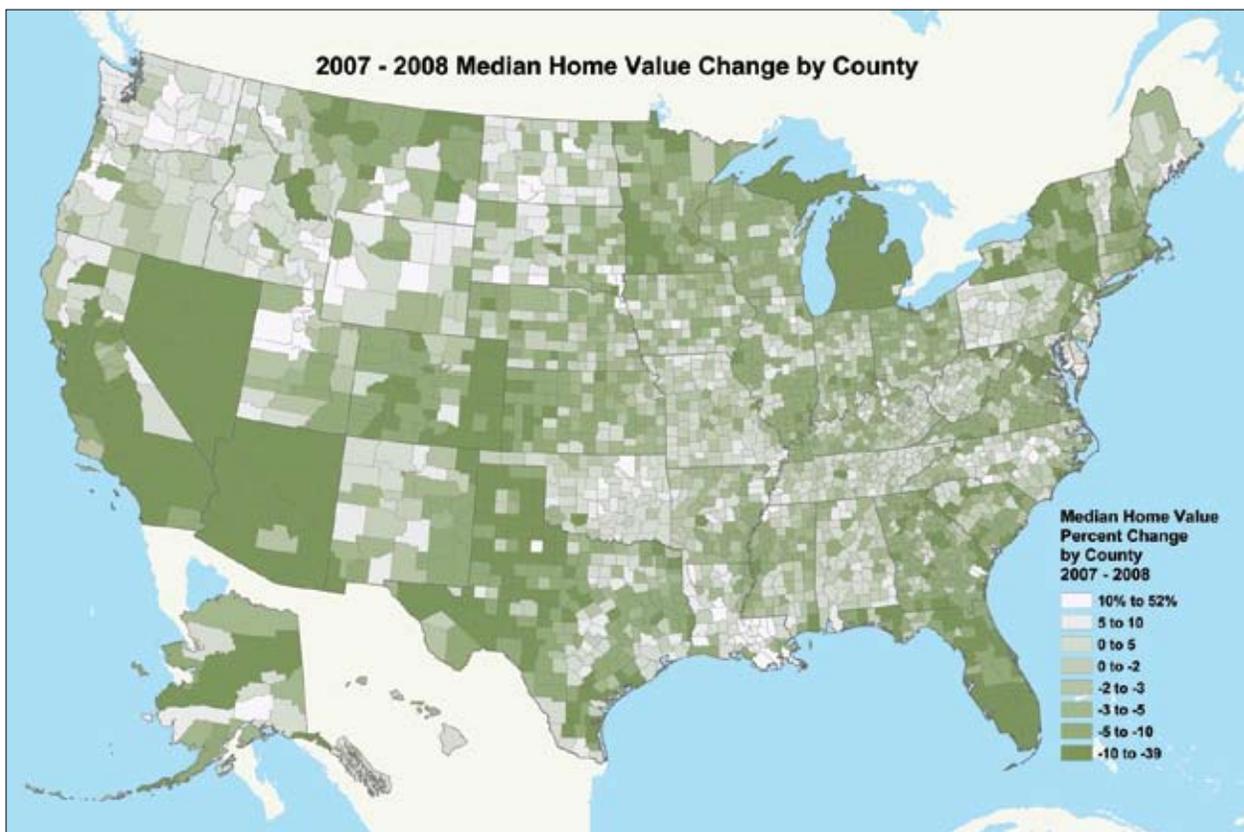
Resources

Where can government agencies obtain the type of demographic data that will help them understand their citizenry and find the right solutions to address problems? Though several public and private sources provide various packages of demographic data, the trends and figures described in this article come from ESRI's 2008/2013 newly released demographic data updates; they contain comprehensive information about the demographic changes that are occurring in the United States today. ESRI's demographic data updates are developed with proven methodologies by ESRI's data development team. Led by chief demographer Lynn Wombold, the data development team has a long history of excellence in market intelligence. The combined expertise of the team's economists, statisticians, demographers, geographers, and analysts totals nearly a century of data and segmentation development experience. The team has crafted data methodologies, such as the demographic update, segmentation, the diversity index, and Retail MarketPlace, that are now industry benchmarks. Authors of white papers such as *Evaluating Population Projections: The Importance of Accurate Forecasting* and *Trends in the U.S. Multiracial Population from 1990–2000,* the team members frequently present sessions and papers to industry and professional organizations.

ESRI's demographic data is available as ad hoc databases, in a variety of geographies and formats, as part of the data package in ArcGIS Business Analyst desktop software; in reports and maps from Business Analyst Online, ESRI's on-demand analysis tool; with ArcGIS Business Analyst Server; and in Community Sourcebooks.

For more information about ESRI's current-year demographic data estimates, five-year projections, and other population and consumer-related data, visit www.esri.com/data. **GM**

2007 - 2008 Median Home Value Change by County

Median Home Value
Percent Change
by County
2007 - 2008

- 10% to 52%
- 5 to 10
- 0 to 5
- 0 to -2
- -2 to -3
- -3 to -5
- -5 to -10
- -10 to -39

Cass County, North Dakota, Manages Election Activities with GIS

Citizens Access Data Online, and Staff Are Better Prepared

By Kay Anderson, GISP, GIS Coordinator, Cass County, North Dakota

Cass County is located in eastern North Dakota bordering the Red River, which separates North Dakota and Minnesota. Fargo, as both the county seat and largest city in the state, has been experiencing a rapidly growing population for more than 10 years. The 2000 Census showed that the county's population had grown to more than 123,000 residents, up 20 percent from 1990. Along with this large population, relative to the entire state's population of less than 650,000, 10 of the state's 47 legislative districts are wholly or partially in Cass County.

In 2000, Cass County started building a GIS, and it has expanded over the years to support its complex election-related activities such as creating precinct boundaries and delivering information about polling place locations to citizens. After development of the parcel basemap, unique layers, including election boundaries, were added for the county auditor.

As elections administrator, the county auditor administers all state and county and some local elections. Because of the different legislative, school district, and city boundaries within the county's 58 precincts, there were 109 different ballot styles in the 2006 primary election. One precinct alone had six different ballot styles, which typically leads to confusion for election workers and voters. Before GIS, the county auditor had difficulty determining which ballot style should be used by a voter. The election maps produced by the GIS effectively overlay the different boundaries, providing a clear picture of the districts. With the addition of the latest aerial imagery in the background, the auditor can easily determine each individual residential address that falls within any given ballot area.

To further support election activities throughout the state, North Dakota is currently developing a central voter file that will be used statewide in 2008. The file includes a list of all people who have voted in Cass County and

each of their addresses coded with district, precinct, city or township, and school district. The county's GIS department is currently geocoding all these addresses to verify that they are located within the correct precinct boundary.

Improving Public Service, Saving Time, and Empowering Decision Makers

GIS has been critical to managing and informing citizens of confusing issues during election times and has reduced the volume and stress associated with calls to the courthouse on Election Day. Citizens—especially newly eligible voters—are often confused about where to vote; many of them are not familiar with the precinct they reside in. The GIS maps provide an immediate visual aid and reference. With rapid growth in the metro area, city boundaries are continually changing, and some citizens are unsure if they are geographically located within or outside city limits, which determines their eligibility to vote on city races. For those voters without school-age children, there is often limited awareness of the location of school district boundaries, which cover much larger areas than city boundaries. Cass County utilizes its GIS maps to educate voters in a variety of ways about polling locations prior to elections. Internally, the maps are used to quickly determine necessary boundary changes.

To educate voters, the county initially took out one-page ads in the local newspaper, the *Fargo Forum,* showing precinct boundaries and polling locations. In 2005, the county began investing in a color insert that more clearly distinguishes school, city, and precinct boundaries and is distributed in the local paper the Monday prior to Election Day. A map for each district shows precinct boundaries, polling locations, and addresses. Prior to the implementation of ESRI's mapping software, maps had been hand drawn on a county highway map, and it was very
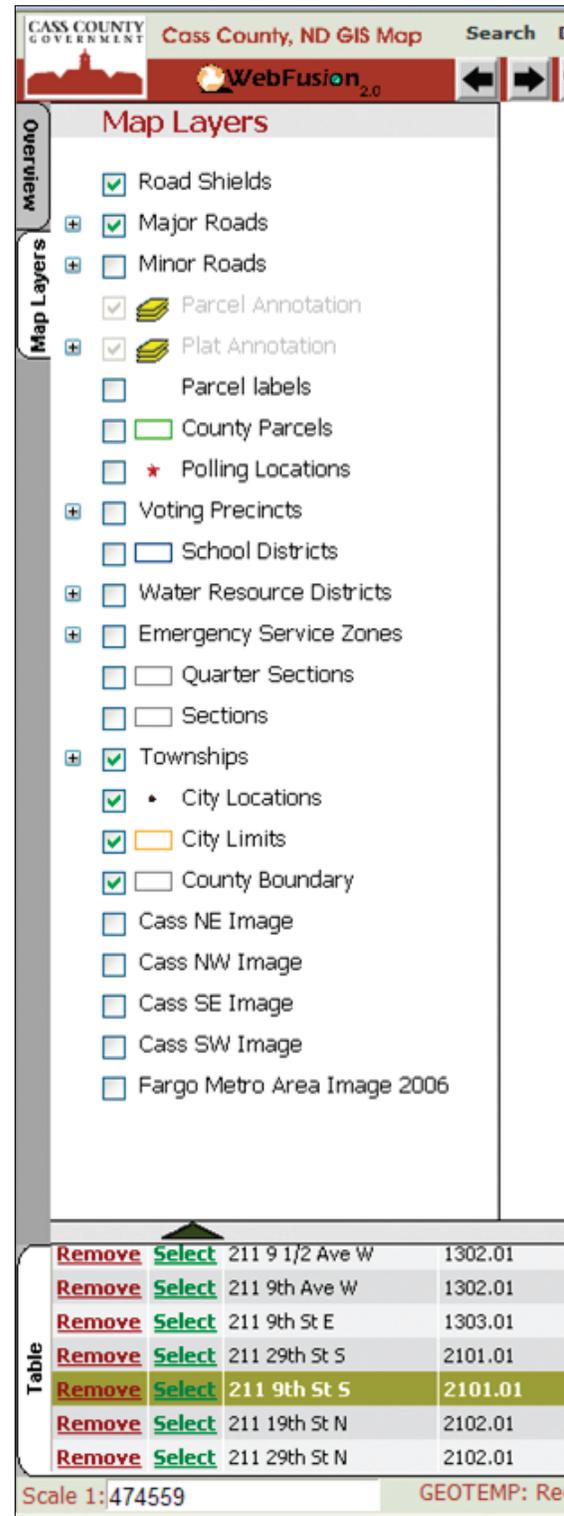
difficult to distinguish precinct boundaries.

On Election Day, each precinct displays large paper maps of the precinct to assist with voter verification. Using ArcGIS Desktop for quick and easy map production supports last-minute boundary and polling location changes.

As its GIS was developing, Cass County recognized that citizens were increasingly us-

Single Feature ⊗

Available Reports

S ⦿
M ◯
L ◯

Precinct Report ▾ | Go |

Precinct Report
Precinct Map

Feature Information

| PROPERTY ADDRESS | 211 9th St S |
| precinct_name | 2101.01 |

ROCHESTER PAGE DOWS
WALDEN
PAGE
BEDFORD
ERIE
LAKE RICH ERIE
AYR
CORNELL AYR EMPIRE
ABSARAKA
TOWER BUFFALO WHEATLAND CASSELTON HARMONY RAYMOND REED REILES ACRES
TOWER CITY BUFFALO WHEATLAND CASSELTON MAPLETON NORTH RIVER HARWOOD WOOD PROSPER
HILL HOWES GILL EVEREST DURBIN MAPLETON BARNES PRAIRIE ROSE
EMBDEN DURBIN FRONTIER BRIARWOOD
CHAFFEE LYNCHBURG HORACE WILD RICE
CLIFTON ELDRED WALBURG MAPLE RIVER ADDISON WARREN STANLEY ST BENEDICT
ALICE WARREN
DAVENPORT
PONTIAC HIGHLAND WATSON LEONARD DAVENPORT NORMANNA PLEASANT HICKSON OXBOW
WOODS KINDRED

Records 1 to 14 (of 14 records selected)

Cass County's interactive precinct finder enables citizens to use their property address to search for information about their polling location. Once identified, they can view and print either a PDF map or a precinct report containing voting location information, Election Day times, and instructions.

ing the Internet to conduct daily business, so the GIS department, with the assistance of Pro-West & Associates, Inc., implemented a parcel map and data search Web site. The site was originally built using ArcIMS technology but has recently been converted to an ArcGIS Server site. Later, a precinct search tool was added to enable citizens to enter their property address, parcel identification number, or township/city name and view their voting precinct information in a report or map format. This online search tool has also assisted county staff fielding calls from citizens on Election Day and has been available on a stand-alone kiosk located at the largest shopping mall in Fargo.

Since the initial development of the GIS, Cass County has undergone a number of boundary and polling location changes that were necessary to accommodate changes in population and accessibility requirements for polling locations. GIS has been invaluable at these times; boundaries can be quickly and easily altered and presented for approval by county officials.

Upcoming ESRI Events

2008 ESRI Homeland Security GIS Summit
October 20–23
Scottsdale Plaza Resort
Scottsdale, AZ
www.esri.com/hssummit

2009 ESRI Federal User Conference
February 18–20
Washington Convention Center
Washington, DC
www.esri.com/feduc

2009 ESRI Developer Summit
March 23–26
Wyndham Hotel and Palm Springs
Convention Center
Palm Springs, CA
www.esri.com/devsummit

Celebrate 10 Years of GIS Day!

Help celebrate the tenth anniversary of GIS Day on Wednesday, November 19, 2008. To find help planning and putting on an informative and successful GIS Day event, visit the resource and registration Web site at www.gisday.com.

GIS Day provides an international forum for users of GIS technology to demonstrate real-world applications that are making a difference in our society. More than 80 countries participate in holding local events such as corporate open houses, hands-on workshops, community expos, and school assemblies. GIS Day is principally sponsored by the National Geographic Society, the Association of American Geographers, University Consortium for Geographic Information Science, the United States Geological Survey, the Library of Congress, Sun Microsystems, Hewlett-Packard, and ESRI.

Cass County, North Dakota, Manages Election Activities with GIS

Currently, the county is reducing its precincts from 58 to 35. Election staff are able to use GIS to locate potential new polling sites and evaluate their suitability for access and parking by using aerial imagery. Visualization of the changes makes it easier for election officials to see the impacts in relation to city boundaries, the road network, and school districts.

Overall, a great number of time and cost benefits have been realized from incorporating election data into the GIS. The County Auditor's Office can now focus on preparation of the ballots, election workers, and polling locations instead of fielding inquiries about polling locations. As the county looks forward to the 2010 Census, it is already preparing its address and population data to maximize participation in the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) project.

For more information, contact Kay Anderson, GISP, GIS coordinator, Cass County Government, North Dakota, at 701-241-5762 or andersonk@casscountynd.gov, or visit www.casscountynd.gov/departments/GIS/index.htm. **GM**

This stand-alone kiosk was located at the largest shopping mall in Fargo during elections. It enables voters to quickly find information about their polling location and Election Day through an interactive GIS mapping site. When not at the mall, the kiosk is located at the county courthouse to enable citizens to quickly access the Cass County Web site for general information.

Public Works and City Clerk's Office Collaborate on Election Day Planning with GIS

these tickets can be sent to the City Clerk's Office for payment, the office sought to reduce the inconvenience and expense of this process by notifying the poll workers of street sweeping schedules in advance.

Using GIS, impacted polling locations can be quickly identified, flagged, and updated with street sweeping times. On training day, poll workers are now advised if their location is in an area that is scheduled for street sweeping and the hours during which it will occur.

To make more strides toward reducing ticket-ing, the Department of Financial Management's Parking Citation Section is provided with a list and map showing polling locations within street sweeping areas so that cars will not be ticketed in these areas.

Street construction is another issue for a number of polling locations on Election Day. Usually, if street construction interferes with activity at a polling place, construction crews must stop work for the day. However, by over-laying the planned street construction areas with the polling locations in advance of the election, GIS allows Public Works and City Clerk's Office officials to coordinate with crews and, when necessary, either redirect them for the day or relocate a polling location.

Without GIS, these hundreds of polling locations would need to be painstakingly re-searched record by record to identify scheduled street sweeping and street construction. With GIS, this analysis is completed in a matter of minutes.

To analyze street construction, polling ad-dress location data is provided to the GIS section in a .csv format that is geocoded and buffered to 500 feet. Address points are overlaid with street segments that are queried by status for construc-tion, design, or bid values. Then, an intersection is made between the street construction seg-ments and the buffer file.

For street sweeping, an intersection is made with the geocoded polling locations and the street sweeping area file that is queried for Tuesday (Election Day). After the intersection, the affected polling locations are attributed with the values for sweeping times.

In the future, the GIS section will coordi-nate with the Pipeline Permit section to iden-tify Long Beach Gas and Long Beach Water Department projects that may affect polling locations.

For more information, contact Jennifer Gómez, GIS analyst II, Public Works Department, City of Long Beach, at Jennifer_Gomez@longbeach.gov. GM
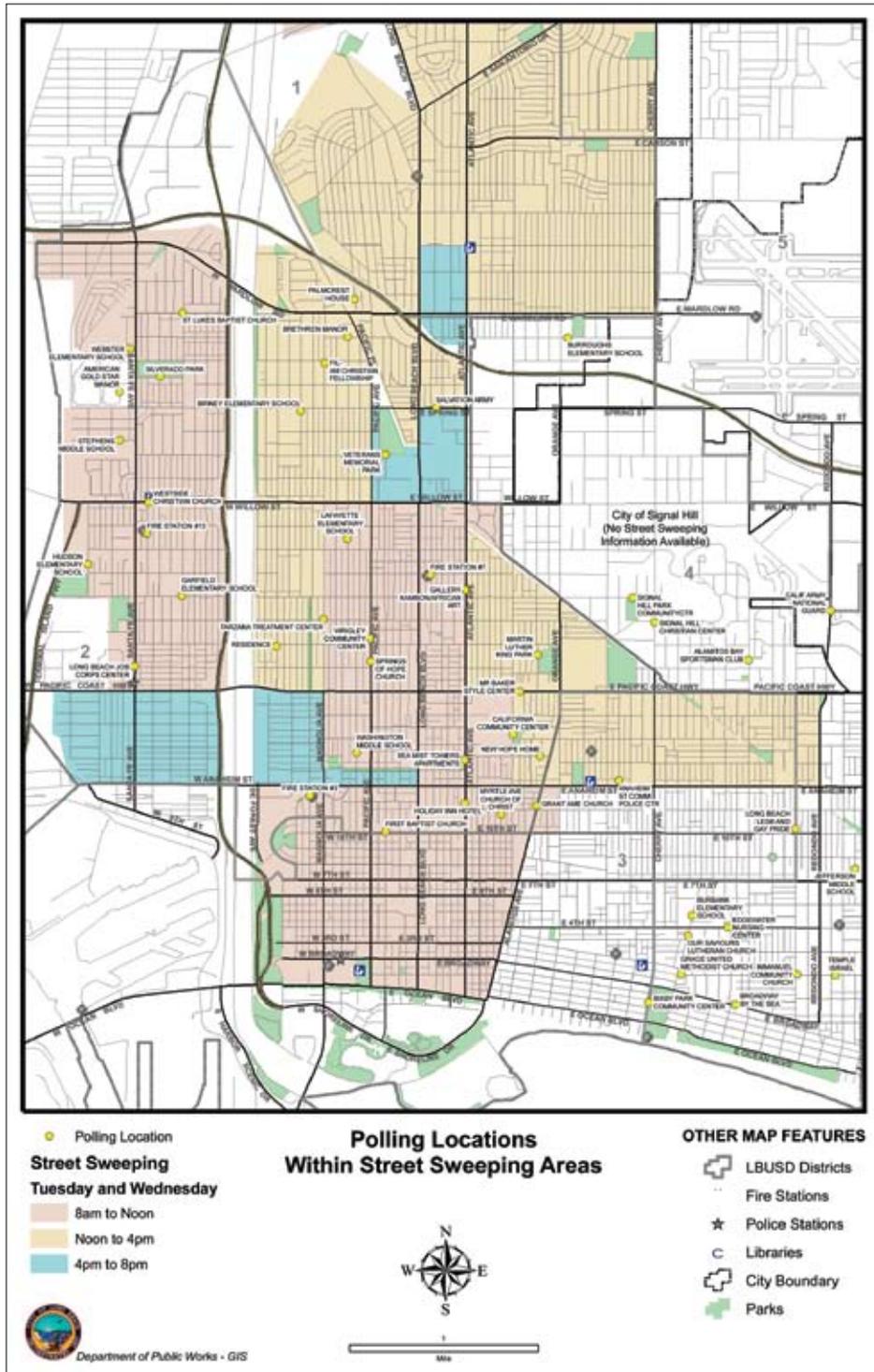
To minimize parking tickets, a map of polling locations and street sweeping schedules is given to poll workers and parking enforcement personnel in advance of Election Day.

How Can Community Leaders Use GIS to Make Green Decisions?

The environmental movement has long touted the benefits of acting responsibly about the earth. Activities and campaigns have involved public education about all things environmentally friendly or "green" and are combined with efforts to mitigate poor environmental stewardship. Citizens and businesses have become aware of the importance of recycling, hazardous waste removal, cleaning up our coastlines, and reducing air pollution through sound transportation policies.

The public's awareness of one of the greatest environmental challenges facing the world today—global warming—has grown via the efforts of former vice president Al Gore. He wants to alert people to the seriousness of the global warming crisis, and with his movie *An Inconvenient Truth,* a book of the same title, and his traveling slide show, Gore is trying to reach as many people as possible with the message.

People are beginning to ask community leaders questions about their towns' sustainability policies: What is our community's carbon footprint? What is the value of a tree? What does it cost to go green?
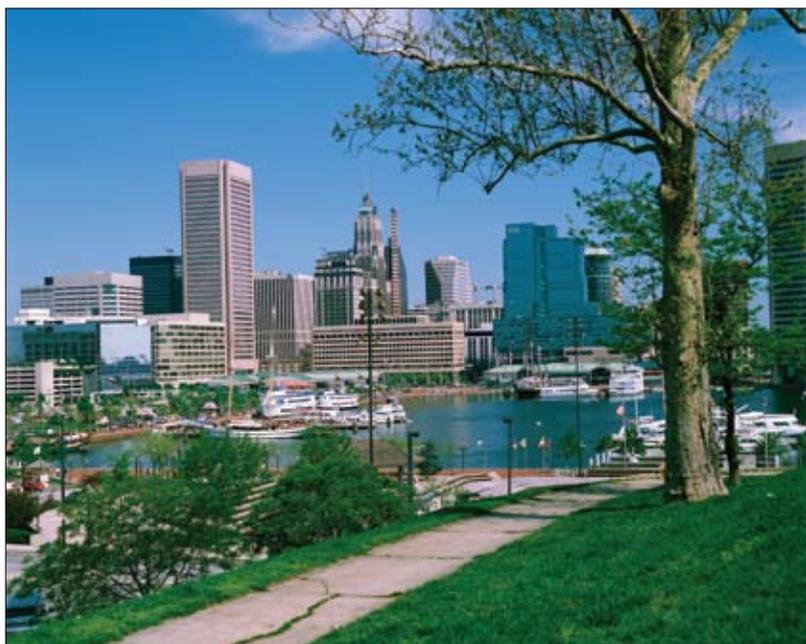
> **How can GIS help you make "green" decisions that positively impact your community?**

39°54′50.9206″N
105°08′17.8710″W
09:38:58 MDT

39°54′50.8894″N
105°08′17.8650″W
09:39:27 MDT

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How Can Community Leaders Use GIS to Make Green Decisions?

GIS Demonstrates the Truth about Trees

After years of global neglect, time is not on the side of officials as they grapple with how to implement green policies. How does government maximize opportunities to improve the environment and lessen communities' carbon footprints? How do governments evaluate green opportunities and prioritize them based on the greatest return on investment?

In addition to being an excellent tool for visualization, GIS technology supports analysis, a use that is rooted in science. CITYgreen is a GIS software tool with an opportune application. It was created by American Forests, the oldest nonprofit citizen conservation organization, which has led the way in developing new approaches to conservation. The first step in American Forests' plan to encourage a grassroots approach to affecting public policy by ensuring substantial tree canopy coverage is for communities to assess their tree canopy cover, which is a proven indicator of a healthy and sustainable urban ecosystem. Informed decisions that take the value of natural resources into account can save cities money and help integrate the built environment with the natural environment.

To help cities uncover the hidden values that trees and green space provide, American Forests developed a GIS analysis technique called the Regional Ecosystem Analysis. The process uses satellite data, field surveys, and GIS software including CITYgreen.

CITYgreen software conducts complex analyses of ecosystem services, creates easy-to-understand reports, and calculates the dollar benefits for the services provided by the trees and other green space in specific areas. CITYgreen supports tree ordinance modeling, carbon offset calculations, storm water runoff modeling, air pollution removal, and land-use modeling.

For more information on the American Forests CITYgreen application, visit www .americanforests.org/productsandpubs/city green/. GM
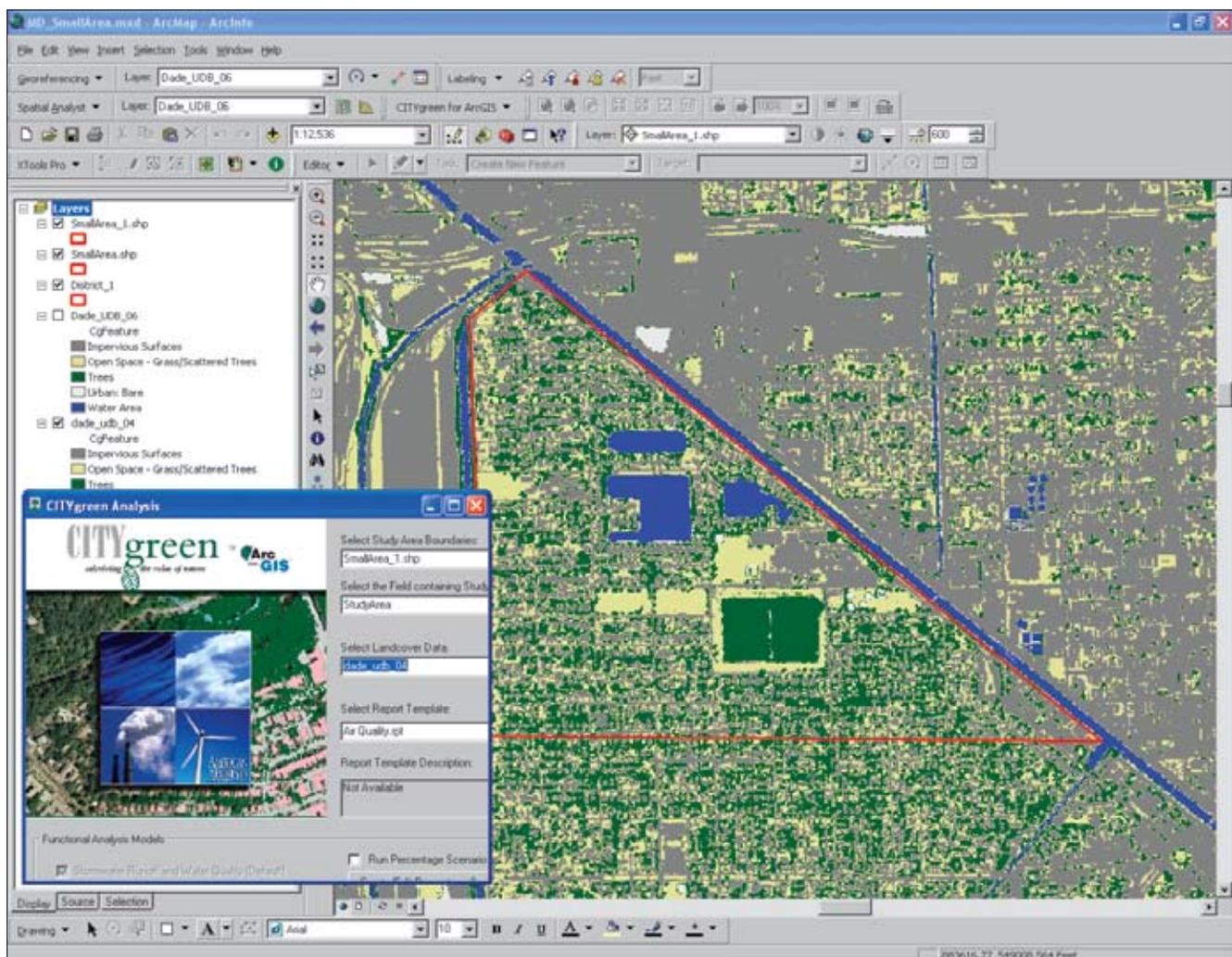
Between 2004 and 2006, this 460-acre area in Miami lost 14 percent of its tree canopy, resulting in 2,220 pounds of additional air pollutants as well as carbon storage reduction of 844 tons.

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[Better Government]

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