

# DISTRICT III DIGEST

Planning & Development District III

[www.districtiii.org](http://www.districtiii.org)

605.665.4408



## GIS Interactive Websites Free in 2016

by Harry Redman

Starting in 2016, District III will be creating FREE (no start up or maintenance cost) interactive GIS websites as part of our basic services to our members and those counties that we have assisted with GIS parcels. Due to the efficiency of GIS and free templates from ESRI, it is now reasonable to provide this assistance at no cost.

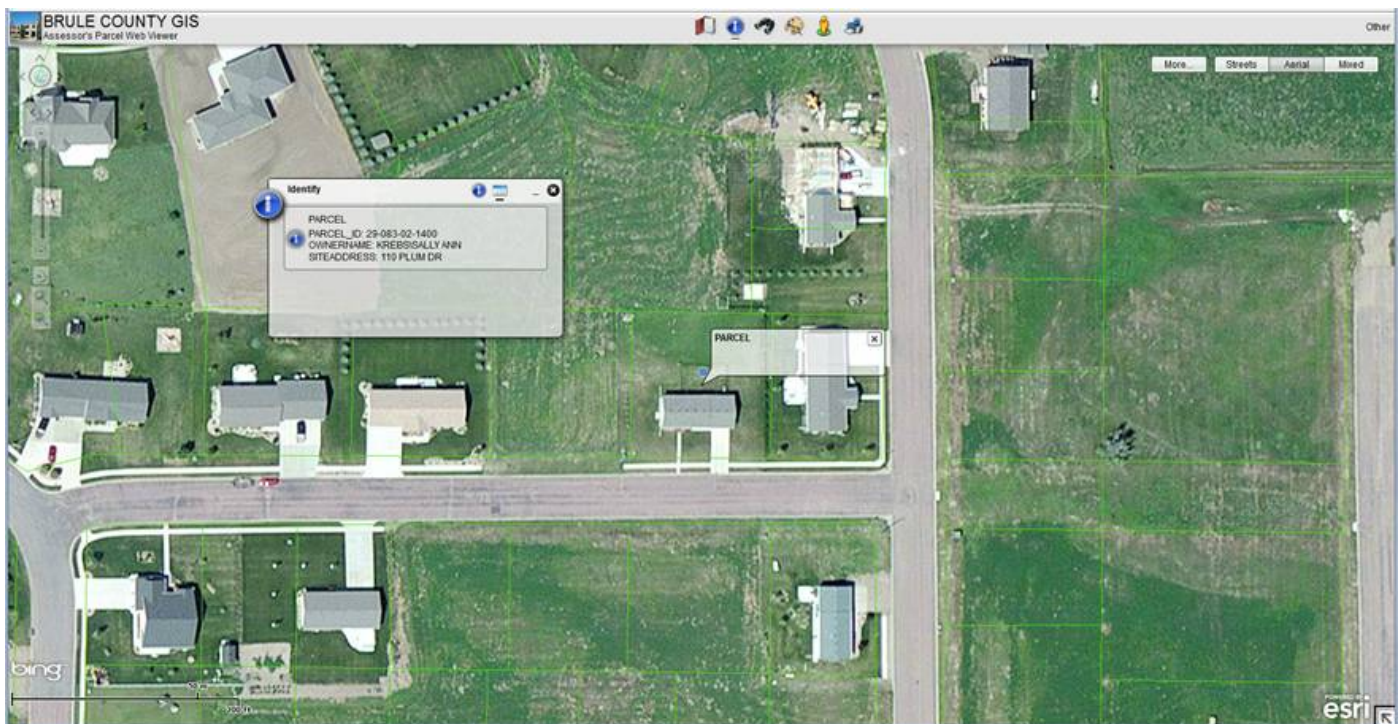
However, you must have GIS Parcels created in order to have a site. This website will run off your GIS data. If you are interested, please let me know and we can discuss your options and abilities. This is

still something you might want to discuss with the commissioners, especially when it comes to putting names, addresses, assessed values and so on, on the website. BUT you can leave it to just Parcel ID which works out great (e.g. Lyman County).

Again, starting in 2016 our office will create basic on line interactive mapping sites for your county using GIS parcels as part of our basic services.

Here is an example of what the site will look like:

<http://ims.districtiii.org/brule/>





## STATS America; A “One-Stop Shop” for Information

by Eric Ambrosion

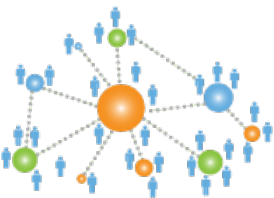
If you’ve needed basic information and have tried to use American Fact Finder in the past, you’ve probably wanted to pull your hair out. It can feel as though you’re trying to get through a dark maze. If looking for data for your community has left you frustrated, try STATS America ([www.statsamerica.com](http://www.statsamerica.com)); a “one-stop shop” for useful information.

STATS America is more or less a “suite” of tools that you can use, depending on the data you are looking for. For most of us, profile-level data provides enough detail for whatever purpose you’re using it for. STATS America has several profile tools that are easy to use. When you open one of the tools, such as “USA Towns in Profile,” you begin by typing in the name of the place. Then, you verify your selection and within seconds, you have a decent profile of the community. You get the latest estimates for the population, labor force, and housing. Most of the tools let you export the data as an Excel spreadsheet, so you can analyze the information in your own way.



Other profile tools take a look at county-level data. “Counties in Profile” is a great tool, not only for researching information on a particular county, but the application also lets you compare up to 16 counties side-by-side. This is very powerful if you want to look at a region. Exporting the data to Excel makes it easy to add all the data together to determine the regional totals.

Other tools let you pick a specific location and build your own geographic area to retrieve data. The “Build a Neighborhood Profile” begins by asking for a general area (such as a city or county). Once entered, the tool’s mapping application zooms to the general geographic area you entered. Then, you can click around the area on one or several census tracts until you have developed your specific area. Aggregate data is shown for the areas you selected. Another useful tool for quickly determining the population and labor force of a large area is the “Big Radius Tool.” Here, you select the geography by entering the name of the town or county you want. Then, you use a slider to select how far out you want your radius to go; from 50 to 500 miles. The data returns showing the population of all the counties in the region and it also provides information on the fastest growing counties as well as the estimated labor force and the level of employment in various industries in the region.



There are also tools on the STATS America that offer users deep insights into local and regional economies. The tools are very in-depth, but are still easy to use. “Industry” and “Occupation Clusters” are excellent applications to determine what industries are highly concentrated in the region and the focus of the labor force’s specialization. “On the Map” is a useful way to determine commuting patterns and job centers in an area.

In addition to searching for a town or county, the tool also lets you select an area by creating a polygon on a map; which is great for analyzing the employment along a highway corridor or a specific block in town. On the Map really helps answer the question, “Where are the people coming from who work here?”

One of most interesting tools in the STATS America suite is the “Innovation Index.” The Innovation Index measures several indicators regarding a region’s innovative components and compares those components to other regions that you can choose. You can compare your custom region with the state, other counties in the

state, and other states. The tool compares your region with United States figures by default. The major components measured by the Index include, Human Capital, Economic Dynamics, Productivity and Employment, and Economic Well-Being. The tool uses an algorithm of all the components to develop the resulting "index." All indices are based on a US benchmark level of 100. Levels above 100 would indicate figures that point towards innovative activity and vice-versa if the level is below 100. By drilling deeper into each of the components, you can determine which factors are contributing most to a county's innovation (or lack thereof).



The bottom line to STATS America is that even the more "in-depth" tools are easy to use. With just a few clicks and keystrokes, you can gain access to very useful data. One disclaimer about STATS America: Some of the tools are undergoing changes and upgrades, so the functionality of the tools may be comprised for a short time. For instance, the Innovation Index is coming out with a new version soon that will add new dimensions of research to the methodology.

If you don't wish to use STATS America or American Fact Finder, Planning and Development District III can assist you in mining specific information that you are looking for. Just give us a call at 605-665-4408 for help.

## Areawide Business Council, Inc. Revolving Loan Fund

*by Lori Cowman*

In March, ABC was awarded a 75% grant for \$600,000 from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). These funds were matched with a \$100,000 grant from the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) through the South Dakota Economic Development Partnership Program along with \$100,000 of unencumbered ABC funds for a total re-cap of \$800,000.

ABC became eligible to apply for these grant funds due to the summer 2014 disaster declarations in Jerauld and Hanson Counties. Since March, three more District III counties received Presidential Disaster Declarations - Brule, Buffalo and Lyman. Therefore, ABC requested an amendment from EDA to add these counties to the impact or service area. We recently were approved for the amendment so this re-cap may now be used in the five following counties:

- Jerauld
- Hanson



- Brule
- Buffalo
- Lyman

Once the \$800,000 is initially disbursed or loaned out in these five counties, the revolved funds will be able to be used in and will benefit the entire 16 county District III service area.

Please keep this source of capital in mind for projects in the area. The Board has approved an initial special **low interest rate of 2.5%** to get these dollars out working in our region. Our eligibility, financing policies and loan requirements still apply, such as:

- Primary bank/lender participation
- No re-financing

Contact: Lori Cowman  
[abc@districtiii.org](mailto:abc@districtiii.org)  
 (605)665-4408 or (800)952-3562

## Recent Zoning Issues

A zoning ordinance like all ordinances is designed to be flexible. Ordinances are meant to be revised throughout their existence in order to best address the needs of its authors. Recently, several zoning issues ranging from amendments to appeals have risen to the forefront. In some instances these issues may require revisions of local zoning regulations while others may simply warrant a discussion on how best to address situations within your respective governmental unit.

Appeals and how they are handled was a process which the State Legislature modified four times in a five year period from 1999 to 2004. As is the case with all regulations where local governments are empowered by State Statute, local regulations are superseded or take a back seat to State Law. Therefore in those instances where Statute has changed and local regulations were not revised accordingly one must defer to the current State Law. South Dakota Codified Law 11-2-61 addresses the appeals process and clearly states that Board of Adjustment decisions are to be appealed to the Court of Record thereby exhausting all administrative (local governmental) remedies. Once the administrative process has been completed the issue or appeal becomes a legal matter thus removing the process from local officials and boards.

Amending an ordinance encompasses two distinct activities to include modification of text or changing the zoning designation on a piece of property. Both of the aforementioned activities are amendments to a legislative action, adoption of an ordinance, therefore subject to the same proceedings as adoption of the original ordinance. No revisions to the text nor rezoning or property may occur unless such is done in accordance with state statute addressing adoption or amendment of an ordinance. Due to the lengthy amendment process it is important to note minor revisions or issues as they occur while maintaining a detailed list of potential amendments. At those times when significant revisions are needed due to legal challenges, statute revisions or local policy changes an amendment process can be initiated which will encompass the previously noted revisions.

As noted earlier a zoning ordinance is flexible and is to be a living document which evolves as the environment changes. Understanding this and having seen significant changes on the legal, legislative, and local fronts it may be time for a review of your zoning ordinance. If you see a need to update your ordinances or would like to review them please contact us.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### January

1<sup>st</sup> New Year's Day - Office Closed  
18<sup>th</sup> Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Office Closed  
28<sup>th</sup> Tentative Committee Meeting, Mitchell

#### February

15<sup>th</sup> President's Day - Office Closed

#### May

30<sup>th</sup> Memorial Day - Office Closed

### Application Due Dates

#### Jan

1<sup>st</sup> SRF-Drinking/Clean Water  
1<sup>st</sup> SWMP  
5<sup>th</sup> Mary Chilton  
31<sup>st</sup> GOED (EDD, LIIP)

#### Feb

1<sup>st</sup> State Water Plan  
1<sup>st</sup> Deadwood Fund

#### April

1<sup>st</sup> SRF-Drinking/Clean Water  
1<sup>st</sup> SWMP  
15<sup>th</sup> CDBG  
15<sup>th</sup> DOT Industrial/Agribusiness

#### May

1<sup>st</sup> State Water Plan  
5<sup>th</sup> Mary Chilton

## Director's Corner

*by Greg Henderson*

### New Employee

District III recently hired Greg Atkinson as a Geographic Information System Technician. Greg's employment brings our GIS services back to full capacity. GIS has become a critical technical assistance activity, which helps county offices, city staff and project sponsors. We are continuing to expand our capabilities and Greg's skills will aid in that effort.

### County Transportation Plans

The South Dakota Department of Transportation has provided guidance to counties on developing "Five Year County Highway and Bridge Improvement Plans" or "Transportation Plans". The plans are on eligibility requirement if a county wants to seek

assistance under the new "Bridge Improvement Grant" (BIG) Program. The program provides grant assistance on a wide range of projects, including engineering, preventative maintenance, and new bridge construction. Counties were required to submit their initial plan to DOT by December 15, 2015. Annual updates will be prepared during the budget process. District III staff are prepared to help counties with their plans. We are able to provide assistance on every part of the plan, with the exception of preliminary engineering on projects that are anticipated in the near future. The planning process and DOT expectations were received at District III's August 26<sup>th</sup> meeting in Platte.

## Hazard Mitigation Funds Available

*by John Clem*

As a result of the Father's Day storms in June, the State of South Dakota received a Presidential Disaster Declaration, which means that Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds will be available. The application period is open until May 1, 2016, and applications will be accepted from any county within the state. The approximate amount of funding is \$440,000.

All types of hazard mitigation projects are eligible, including projects to mitigate against flooding, powerline burial, warning sirens, generators for critical infrastructure, and mitigation planning. If funded, FEMA will pay 75% of the cost for the project.

Applicant briefings to provide more information

about the program will be held on October 20 at 2:30 PM CDT and October 22 at 10:30 AM CDT to discuss project eligibility and environmental requirements, and to answer any questions about the program. The briefings will be conducted via teleconference by the state Office of Emergency Management.

The District III office has a great deal of experience with this program, having successfully developed hazard mitigation applications in Aurora, Bon Homme, Charles Mix, Davison, Douglas, Gregory, Hutchinson, Jerauld, and Yankton Counties within the last few years. Please contact John Clem if you would like more information about this opportunity.

## SD Governor's House Program

*by Fred Binder*

The Governor House Program continues as a viable and popular option for affordable housing in South Dakota. The program now offers two and three bedroom houses as well as narrow lot options. There are a variety of floor plans and other options to go with the house. The sales price for the 3 bedroom house is \$47,200.00 delivered, and for the 2 bedroom house is \$40,500.00 delivered.

A lot of attention has been given to the added energy efficiency of the house. The R-Value of the exterior walls has increased from R-24 to R-29 and the Attic R-Value has increased from R-49 to R-60. Changing sliding windows to casement windows has decreased air infiltration and improved the window U-Value to .29. The gas furnace has improved to 96.1% efficiency and the electric water heater has a .93

efficiency factor. Homeowners should see at least 15-25% decrease in energy usage from previous Governor's Houses.

Governor Houses are now built to "Energy Star Standards" and can be certified as such providing the house is on the foundation and meets the field testing standards. Energy Star certified homes will be eligible for Energy Efficient Mortgages which will help a homeowner leverage energy savings into purchasing power.

If you are interested in more information about the Governor House Program, please check out our website or call Fred Binder at 665-4408 for a packet of information.

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Planning & Development District III

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