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### 46th Annual Taxation Conference APPRAISAL for AD VALOREM TAXATION

of Communications, Energy and Transportation Properties

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GIS Data & Improving Operating Efficiency & Performance



- The challenges to making accurate jurisdiction assignments
- The 4 key processes that must be in place to make jurisdiction assignments
- GIS tools available for aiding accuracy and efficiency
- 7 common pitfalls to avoid

# Importance of accurately relating assets to jurisdictions

- Filing returns, protest or appeal
- Acquiring another company's assets
- Estimating for a proposed project

Accuracy wins credibility

# Inaccurate assignments cost time and money

#### Wasted time

• Correcting returns, re-filing due to wrong jurisdiction, taking calls from assessors ...

#### Wasted money

- More expensive to fix later
- Increased labor costs
- Unplanned audits, penalties and interest
- Cost of filing amended return, getting refund
- Likely overpayments to higher taxing jurisdiction

#### Loss of Credibility

# Property tax department challenges

Understaffed and underfunded

Under pressure to reduce:

- Labor costs, expenses
- Misfiling, overpayments/ underpayments
- Audits, penalties and interest
- Risk of poor customer service, negative publicity

#### **Dangers to Credibility**



Short of time and resources

Need to get through a set of returns other than manually

Need to know that what's filed is based on sound placements

**Dangers of Loss of Credibility** 

### **Meeting these challenges**

Accurately relating assets to jurisdictions and keeping up with jurisdiction changes requires:

- 1. Skilled people
- 2. Time
- 3. Defined and tested processes
- 4. Specialized tools and systems

Challenging! Let's see how we do it

## 4 key processes



Data Collection Maps Geographic Information

YOUR COMPANY



Data Collection
Geographic Information Systems
Assignment
Analysis and Reporting

### **Data collection process**

- Maintain database of jurisdictions
- Discover & acquire supporting data
- Validate for correctness
- Catalog and organize data





## Pitfall #1: City boundaries change... Cheyenne, WY





### Sometimes in surprising ways... Celina, TX





# Geographic Information Systems process

- Map and validate jurisdiction boundaries
- Assure complete: No unwanted gaps
- Assure boundaries align with map features



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# Pitfall #2: Gaps and overlaps must be resolved



# Pitfall #3: Topological errors must be corrected



# Pitfall #4: Jurisdiction boundaries must be aligned to features where intended

BEFORE

AFTER



### **Assignment process**

- Assets and jurisdiction boundaries must be in same land base.
- Standardize/geocode situs asset addresses
- For linear assets:
  - Measure lengths of each cut segment
  - Make adjustments for stationing
  - Reconcile lengths
- Assign jurisdictions to assets



### **Pitfall #5: Poor quality addresses** must be corrected



Identify unresolved addresses before correct asset placement can occur.

Poor quality addresses cause inaccuracies

# Pitfall #6: A consistent land base must be used



### **Analysis and Reporting process**

- Validate output assignments
- Report in the form the Tax Department requires
- Provide reports and maps of the assigned assets in their jurisdictions



### Pitfall #7 : Required output needs to be defined



### 4 key processes to Success!



#### **YOUR COMPANY**



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### Conclusion

- Accurate jurisdiction assignments saves everyone time and money
- Specialized GIS tools can enhance productivity
- YOU can build processes to achieve accurate jurisdiction assignments!