

Pottawattamie County Geographic Information Systems (GIS)



David Bayer spoke at the Treynor Optimist Club on January 15. He works for the Pottawattamie County GIS department. The department has a staff of four people. Their responsibilities include organizing mapping for the county. They map points (fire hydrants) lines (streets, natural gas lines), and polygons (land parcels, buildings). The department started in 2002.

The GIS department spends 60% of their time for county government, 20% for city government, and 20% for the public. For cities, including Treynor, they provide hand-held, highly accurate GPS devices to the city for mapping sewers, water lines, and other accurate mapping information the city needs.

The GIS department contracts for new aerial photography every three years. It is highly detailed photography, with 6 inch pixels. They fly in March and April when there is no snow on the ground, but the tree leaves are not shading the ground. These maps are used to overlay other information on, including voting

districts, school district information, fire and medical response areas, and public safety information. They also maintain land ownership maps. Their maps can be seen at gis.pottcounty.com.

Pottawattamie County has three departments that are related, the recorders, assessors, and the GIS departments. All three can be accessed through pottcounty.com.

Maps produced by the GIS department can also be seen in the trails at Hitchcock Nature Center <http://www.pottcoconservation.com/html/recreationhitch.html>, in the community services at countyconnection.org, and in crimemapping.org. A new function in 2011 will be oblique photography at a 30 degree angle, letting you see windows and doors on buildings. Some people are also doing cemetery mapping using county GPS units, adding pictures of the headstones for genealogy information.