

# GISette

City of Marlborough  
Massachusetts



A quarterly newsletter to keep users informed of updates and changes to the City's Geographic Information System

Volume 2, Issue 2

Winter 2012

## FOLLOW THIS LINK TO THE NEW PUBLIC WEB GIS SITE

<http://gis.marlborough-ma.gov>

**Welcome** once again to the Sixth edition of the *GISette*! I am going to adhere to the same format as the previous newsletter because of the growing interest and usage of the *PIMA* website. Remember, Marlborough's **GIS is now available to the general public!** Marlborough's geographic information system continues to aid the general public, professionals and city employees alike. Please pass the word to anyone you think can benefit from its use. I will continue to include the 'Tips and Tricks' section to the newsletter in the hopes that it will make the web mapping site easier to use. There are a lot of tools built in to the new site.

Remember, *PIMA* Allows Users to:

- Create customized abutters lists
- Identify property and ownership information
- Measure distances and areas
- Create and print fully customizable maps
- Turn on and off layers, displaying a range of information
- View and download utility plans

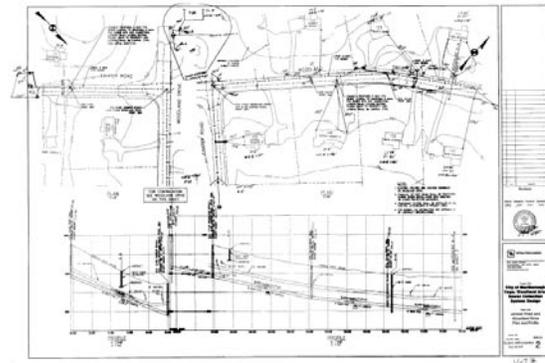
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### *View Plans through PIMA*

*View and download utility plans directly*

Several years ago now, we began the process of digitizing all of our existing paper maps and plans. This served several purposes. First and foremost, should some catastrophe destroy all of the paper records, we would still retain the information. Secondly, it allowed us to begin to recall and share the information electronically. The latter has really changed the way we do business and allowed us to accommodate the needs of the general public and engineering professionals far more effectively and efficiently. When developing the new *PIMA* site, it was a natural progression of this new way of providing service to integrate these electronic documents for public access.



*Click the image to go to the new PIMA site*

The benefits to the user should become immediately obvious. The ease of access will make gathering information for engineering professionals, surveyors and homeowners a much more convenient process. Although it will not eliminate the need completely, it should cut down on the need to make a special trip to view certain documents. This is another giant leap forward that allows Marlborough to more efficiently serve its residents general public as a whole. See the '*Tips and Tricks*' section to see how this is done.

## Using Apple's iPad as a Mobile GIS Solution

*Applying tablets for field use in a public works environment*

I think we're all familiar with Apple's iPad by now. If you don't own one, you surely know somebody that does and in all likelihood you have had an opportunity to play around with one. You have seen how simply they operate and how intuitive and easy to use they are. They are portable, convenient and very easy to use. These three traits make it a perfect platform for utilizing GIS in variety of situations. If you couple the iPad with aftermarket accessories, you have a weatherproof, durable field computer that allows field personal access to vital information under adverse conditions. Information that can help make more informed decisions in a timely manner leading to lower operating costs and more efficient usage of time and efforts.

Forward thinking companies and organizations have embraced the tablet from early on. Computing power in the field provides real time data and field data collection techniques that prove invaluable for businesses. There are no shortages of third party applications that make the devices endlessly adaptable. Custom applications can also be written allowing very specific tasks to be performed. State and local government can sometimes be behind the curve when adopting new technologies and funding is always an issue. However, Apple's tablet represents a truly cost effective means for municipalities to implement mobile computing. A field ready laptop that costs many thousands can now be replaced with multiple iPads for the same cost without any measurable loss in required capabilities. GIS and the iPad go together seamlessly. Several Massachusetts communities have already employed the iPad for use with its field personnel for GIS data collection. As an example, the City of Haverhill is currently employing the iPad to boost its recycling rates. Public Works crews follow along with automated recycling collection crews on designated recycling days and using a simple inspection form on the iPad, they enter some basic data at each stop. Then, they move on to the next stop and do it again. At the end of the day, they have a clear picture of who is and who is not recycling. The inspection forms were then linked through Haverhill's GIS to produce a list of households they met their target criteria. By performing these simple inspections along recycling routes, they can begin to target those homeowners with incentivizing mailings to encourage increased recycling rates. This is a great example of how linking GIS with mobile field inspections through the use of the iPad can lead to cost savings for the city by reducing trash disposal costs.

### TIPS AND TRICKS VIEWING UTILITY PLANS

1. Open the site and navigate to the area of interest.
2. Once zoomed in, click on the desired map theme listed on the left side of the page. (i.e. Drainage Map)
3. Once displayed, move your cursor to the "Extended Tools" button  at the top of the page and click to open it.
4. Select the identify icon  to activate the identify tool. The button will appear depressed.
5. Now, use the cursor arrow to click on a pipe (Drain or Sewer).
6. A pop up box will appear with information about the selected feature.
7. Look for the field in the pop up box called "ScanImageP" and click on the web address in that field.
8. The plan will automatically open as a full size PDF image that can be viewed or printed.



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