

# Property Mapping

in New Brunswick



# History

In New Brunswick, circa 1968, land survey firms and property mappers began mapping parcels of land to create the first series of detailed property maps for the province. These initial property maps were created at various scales, ranging from 1:1000 to 1:20,000. The surveyor or mapper collected information from various sources, including registered plans and deeds, property assessment data, grant maps and road maps to create a more comprehensive and accurate province-wide mapping system. Each property was assigned a PID (parcel identifier), which serves as the unique key to linking recorded ownership and geographical information (such as parcel location and size) to a particular property.

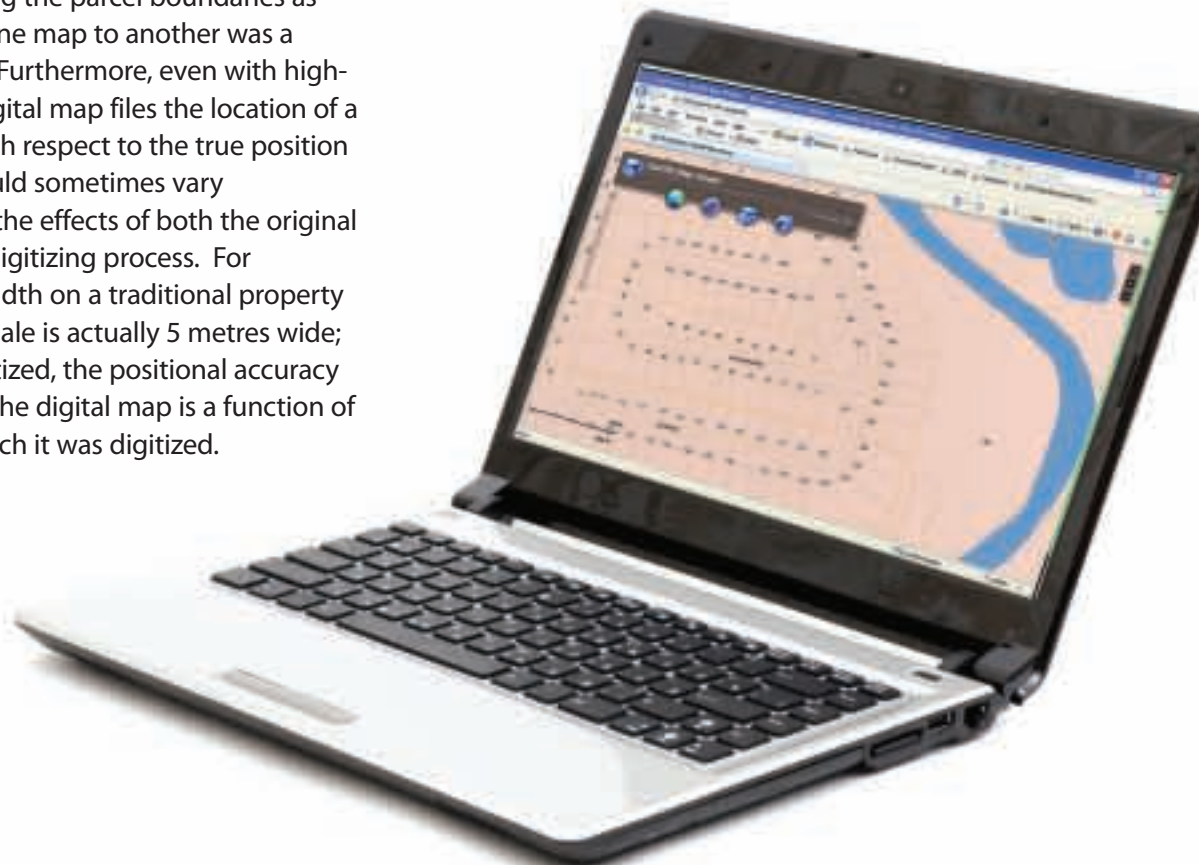
# Digital Maps

In the early 1990's, all of these hard copy property maps began to be digitized using digitizing tables. As one can imagine, due to many different map scales, matching the parcel boundaries as they crossed from one map to another was a major undertaking. Furthermore, even with high-resolution (5 cm) digital map files the location of a parcel boundary with respect to the true position of the boundary could sometimes vary significantly due to the effects of both the original map scale and the digitizing process. For example, the pen width on a traditional property map at a 1:10,000 scale is actually 5 metres wide; therefore, once digitized, the positional accuracy of the boundary in the digital map is a function of the source from which it was digitized.

# Updates

As new subdivision plans and deeds are registered, new parcels of land are created from existing parcels. These newly created boundary lines are added to the digital maps by entering the coordinates of the plans or the dimensions in the parcel descriptions. Property mappers must exercise their best judgement when updating boundary lines in a digital map based on information from paper plans. Their decisions are based on tolerances derived from the scale at which the original property map was compiled to ensure the best possible quality.

A digital property map is a graphical representation of property boundaries which approximates the size, configuration and location of a property. It is *not* a survey and is not intended to be used for legal descriptions or to calculate exact dimensions. It may not be free from error or omission and is intended for reference only.



# Questions and Answers

## **Q: With the digital property maps available online, can I use the coordinates displayed on the map and my personal GPS to run my property line?**

A: No. The unconfirmed accuracy of property lines in a digital map combined with the varying accuracy of handheld GPS devices can set you off from the true location of the line by several meters. For example, a property line that measures 28m long on a survey plan (plotted on a 1:10,000 scale paper map to the best of any property mapper's ability at the time, then digitized), may end up being anywhere from 21m to 35m long on the digital property map.

## **Q: Does the Land Titles system introduced in 2000 guarantee my property boundaries?**

A: No. Under the Land Titles system, the *title* of the property converted is guaranteed by the Government of New Brunswick, but not the boundaries.

## **Q: How can I be certain where my property boundaries are located?**

A: In New Brunswick, only a licensed New Brunswick Land Surveyor is authorized to survey and locate your property boundaries.

## **Q: My deed says I own 100 acres more or less; however, the digital property map provided by Service New Brunswick shows the area of my parcel as 96 acres. Why the difference?**

A: The area shown on the digital property map is the calculated area of the parcel based on how it is mapped. Typically, if a survey plan exists for the parcel and has been used in the mapping; the area on the map will reasonably reflect the area shown on the survey plan. However, if no survey plan exists, then the area shown on the property map may not reflect the area on the deed for several reasons. Sometimes, the areas for properties that had been previously conveyed are not reflected on the deed. In other cases, the *metes and bounds* descriptions in many deeds may not have any dimensions for the parcel boundaries (which means the boundaries were mapped using other sources of information). It was also common to see the metes and bounds description indicating that the area of land conveyed is "more or less".

## Contact

For more information on property mapping, or to contact the Land Registry, please visit:

**[www.snb.ca/landregistry](http://www.snb.ca/landregistry)**