

# AltaLIS

## spatial data warehouse update

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This column is the second of a series written for sharing information with the ALSA membership on recent activities at SDW Ltd. & AltaLIS Ltd.

### AltaLIS & SDW Sign JV Agreement

AltaLIS and SDW have recently finalized and signed a joint venture agreement (JVA) that now secures a long-term commitment to maintain and distribute the Government of Alberta datasets, and to enable further improvements and investments in these digital basemap products.

Discussions are currently underway with stakeholders to establish a forum for continued user involvement and input. This forum may be in the structure of an external advisory group (EAG).

### New Price & License Alternatives

AltaLIS has recently rolled-out new pricing & licensing packages. AltaLIS developed the new packages through consultation with its customers and stakeholders. These discussions indicated a desire to make the digital basemap data more affordable, current and accessible.

The following data packages will no doubt need fine-tuning but we believe they have been developed in the spirit of meeting our client's

needs while recognizing the requirement to cost-recover and preserve the information asset.

#### Standard Rates "standard pricing by the map sheet"

AltaLIS will continue to offer its standard prices for topographic and cadastral basemap data sold by the township or by the NTS map sheet. AltaLIS's standard prices will remain unaffected by any new pricing options.

#### Data Subscription "full data access for the enterprise"

In the interests of providing our larger customers with more alternatives for volume purchases of digital map data, annual subscription pricing and licensing is being offered to AltaLIS end-users. Discounts are offered for product bundles on subscriptions with a minimum order of \$20,000 per year over a 3-year term.

#### Education & Research "data access for the researcher"

To encourage research and development in the field of geomatics, AltaLIS is providing a restricted, low cost package containing our most current spatial datasets, to satisfy the needs of educators, researchers and software developers.

#### Land Surveyors "affordable data for digital survey plan registration"

A new data package is being offered to provide current and affordable property boundary files

to Alberta Land Surveyors seeking registration of survey plans at Alberta Registries.

There will be a *rebate credit* offered for cadastral property files bought by an ALS *if the files are used to register a survey plan in the 'digital plan submission process'*. An ALS can qualify by signing a 'Surveyor Project License'. Once the legal survey plan has been registered at an Alberta Land Titles Office, a rebate credit (excluding the standard \$50 processing fee) will be offered, within one year, on the ALS's next data purchase (see Table 1).

To summarize, the *Surveyor Project* license and pricing package offers:

- **Updated map datasets**, including the latest LTO plans available
- **100% rebates** for cadastral property files purchased for registration of legal survey plans (processing fee not included)
- **Hardcopy distribution** to clients & third parties is permitted (limited)
- **Digital copy distribution** to licensed end-users & to licensed third party consultants is permitted.

### Value Added Service Providers

**Bundled Software Solutions**  
"premium culture data for information services"

Software developers or solution providers, who wish to enhance their software products by integrating AltaLIS data, will find this package gives affordable 'viewing' access for their clients. AltaLIS offers your company a suite of bundled mapping products for client distribution, while keeping administrative costs at a minimum.

## New Packaging

AltaLIS introduces the concept of 'product bundles' to basemap data. Bundling of products allows data access to be consolidated and the data to be sold at lower prices. AltaLIS product bundles include all existing basemap datasets together with feature themes & regrouped as:

1. **BASE**  
Digital topographic data
2. **PROPERTY**  
Digital property boundary data
3. **TERRAIN**  
Digital 3-dimensional elevation data

### More Information

For more information about any of our new data packages please contact the AltaLIS order desk directly (403-716-3490) or visit our new website ([www.altalis.com](http://www.altalis.com)).

## Cadastral Mapping Project

The number of plans registered at Alberta Registries' Land Titles Offices continues at an

unprecedented pace, with a record 10,680 (9,466 excluding Calgary & Edmonton) plans being registered in 1999. Up to 80% of digital plan submissions are integrated into the AltaLIS databases within 30 days of registration, with the remaining being held back due to mapping problems or resource backlogs. The backlog should be eliminated by this fall, after which most plans should be integrated into the base within 30 days of registration.

The graphic files for the cadastral dataset, which were acquired from the Government of Alberta and are being maintained by AltaLIS, are stored as Microstation design (dgn) files. There are approximately 6,600 of these CAD files covering the Province. Associated with these files, is an Oracle database, which contains attribute information for over 6.5 million cadastral stations. The combination of these CAD files linked to a database is currently the most economical and efficient platform for maintaining the cadastral datasets. It is anticipated that in the future, the datasets will be migrated to a seamless structured database. CAD graphic line work would then be generated on-demand for customer distribution.

Alberta Registries currently uses

the CAD files to populate the registered plan viewer interface on their SPIN system.

Registered plans are stored and distributed by them in a TIFF format as generated from the plot (plt) files. These are the same files as submitted by the ALS at the time of registration.

## Municipal Data Exchange Partnerships

Most tentative plan applications are currently submitted in hardcopy format to municipal planning authorities. Some municipalities such as Calgary, began requiring developers to submit "digital tentative plans of subdivision" several years ago. Other municipalities are also now considering, or have implemented, this requirement.

In 1998, SDW & AltaLIS started investigating the feasibility of adding digital tentative plan information to their databases. It was originally suggested that, if feasible, municipalities could benefit by receiving free updated cadastral mapping in exchange for their participation in a 'data exchange' initiative.

Since last fall, municipal partnership prototype testing began at AltaLIS. These prototypes are evaluating the technical and process hurdles of

| PROPERTY Digital Data                            | Price    | Rebate Credit | License Required         |
|--|----------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Rural Cadastral Files (Parcel) Per Township file | \$200.00 | \$200.00      | Surveyor Project License |
| Urban Cadastral Files (MISAM) Per 1:1000 file    | \$10.00  | \$10.00       | Surveyor Project License |
| Subject to standard processing fee (non-rebated) | \$50.00  | \$0.00        | per order                |

Table 1 – Rebate Credit Pricing for Surveyor Project License  
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tentative digital plan submissions to municipalities. The goal is to determine if a viable business case can be developed which meets the needs of the municipalities and the various utility companies. ALSA participation will be encouraged if the project goes ahead.

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## Digital Plan Submission

All stakeholders, and especially Alberta Land Surveyors, should be commended for leading the industry and the nation in implementing a 'digital survey plan submission' process. It's clear that without the support of the Alberta Land Surveyor, the benefits from Land Titles automation and the continued availability of the base mapping products would not be realized. Due to these efforts, the cadastral digital basemap is more useful today than ever. Our attention will now focus on improving other datasets. A comprehensive study is underway to evaluate how to make the SDW topographic datasets more current and valuable.

