



# United States Thoroughfare, Landmark, and Postal Address Data Standard Endorsed by FGDC

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On February 9, 2011, the Steering Committee of the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) endorsed the United States Thoroughfare, Landmark and Postal Address Data Standard.

The Standard is the culmination of efforts of the Address Standard Working Group, which was created in 2005 when the FGDC accepted a proposal submitted by the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA) to create a Street Address Standard.

The Standard contains four parts: address data content, classification, transfer, and quality. The Standard covers each of the main types of addresses found in the United States, and provides a framework for classifying them, understanding their component parts and attributes, testing their quality, and organizing them for exchange with other agencies and the public.

Street addresses are the location identifiers most widely-used by state and local government and the public. Street addresses are critical for administrative, emergency response, research, marketing, mapping, geospatial information systems, routing and navigation, and for law enforcement and first-responders in time of crises. The adoption of the Standard will provide local, state, tribal, and federal agencies with a means to share address information, as well as a methodology for improving response to emergency and non-emergency service requirements, with associated improvements in efficiency, effectiveness and economy.

“The United States Thoroughfare, Landmark, and Postal Address Data Standard will have a significant impact at all levels of government and is an essential component of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure,” said Ivan DeLoatch, Executive Director of the FGDC. “We encourage government agencies, as well as others, to implement the standard for it provides a foundation for understanding and developing solutions for the many challenges in our communities.”

URISA’s Address Standards Working Group (ASWG), led by Carl Anderson, GISP; Hilary Perkins, GISP; Ed Wells, GISP; Martha McCart Wells, GISP; and Sara Yurman, GISP, along with dozens of additional volunteers, has worked tirelessly since 2005 on this effort, with the support of the United States Census Bureau. The Census Bureau will be the maintenance authority for the Address Standard.

The ASWG used an innovative methodology in developing the standard, placing all draft materials and discussion in a public environment through the use of a wiki site, public circulation through URISA’s website of two drafts, and a broad inclusionary effort to help understand “on-the-ground” addressing



issues across all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the United States Territories. In addition, both the U.S. Postal Service and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) were involved, resulting in two profiles of the Standard, outlining the equivalencies and differences between the Address Standard and USPS Publication 28 (the standard for mailing pieces), and NENA's Next Generation 9-1-1 Address Standard (in public review).

- Two drafts were circulated through the URISA Web Site (over 400 comments received on these drafts)
- Over 40 presentations discussing the Standard in progress (URISA, NSGIC, NENA, state, regional, and national conferences, GSDI and ISO internationally)
- Two webinars presented through URISA
- Use of a wiki site to further refine the Standard (more than 500 people joined effort to view and comment)
- Thousands of teleconferences, emails and conversations with practitioners
- Two public comment periods required by the FGDC with 216 comments received.

The results of this consensus-driven process were submitted through the FGDC's formal standards approval process.

The endorsed Standard is published in its entirety on the URISA website, [www.urisa.org](http://www.urisa.org), and is available for use and implementation. It is also available on the [FGDC website](#).

In order to facilitate use and adherence to the Standard, the ASWG has begun work on implementation guidelines. Members of the ASWG have received a CAP Grant from FGDC for the prototyping of data quality and data exchange tools to assist local, state and federal agencies in implementation of the Standard. A new URISA webinar is also planned for May 2011 on the Standard and addressing issues.

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