

Rep Offen
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County Site Analysis Program

The County Site Analysis Program was designed as a service for interested counties in which GIS data is used to identify potential sites that could fit various ag related development projects.

The study considers such things as county setbacks and other local zoning ordinances as well as access to a quality road network, rural water system capacity and distribution, and 3-phase power. Another key component we look at is aquifers from both a standpoint of potential water availability and, more importantly, water protection in helping ensure development only happens where it is environmentally safe.

The intent of the program is for it to be a tool for local governments to use in proactively planning for their future. Our goal is to then simply serve as a resource partner for local leaders at their discretion. This is why the work is only conducted upon a formal request from the county commission.

The Value Added Finance Authority, through its Valued Added Agriculture Subfund, has provided the funding for the program which allows the studies to be done at no cost to the county.

Out of consideration for the owners of individually identified sites and the recognition that no site truly exists for development unless the landowner says it does, we do not share any specific site data with anyone.

We instead reach out confidentially to each landowner to make them aware of the study and offer to provide more information if they are interested.

While the study starts with local leaders, it is ultimately driven by the landowners involved. We respect and support whatever the counties and the landowners decide to do with the information the studies provide and stand ready to assist wherever we can moving forward.

CSAP has helped establish an atmosphere which allows the state to work not only with local leaders but also local residents in proactively addressing the many challenges that come with any kind of development. This can ultimately help everyone involved avoid what can become highly-charged emotional situations at permit hearings where residents feel as though they were not given a fair opportunity ahead of time to understand a project, can trust the protection of their environment is truly being considered, and know other concerns such as roads, water, etc, are also being taken in to account before a project is approved.

In 2014, the County Site Analysis Program received the Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) which provides advocacy, education, research and training for the nation's regional development organizations. This award was presented to and accepted on behalf of the state by Todd Kays with the 1st District Association of Local Governments in Watertown South Dakota. 1st District is the entity that developed the site identification process the CSAP is built around.

Since launching the CSAP in 2013, 55 of South Dakota's 66 counties have voluntarily requested this work. To date, 52 of those counties have been completed. The following map illustrates both the counties signed up and those completed. The final report for each county may be viewed by clicking on the appropriate county on the map.

The above information can be found at the following website. <https://sdda.sd.gov/ag-development/CSAP/default.aspx> Once at the website, you can click on a county you can see the analysis for that county.

On July 1, 2013, the Value Added Sub Fund was transferred from the Board of Economic Development to the VAFA. The VAFA promulgated rules for the VASF and receives \$135,000 annually from the motor fuels tax to add to the fund which is used for feasibility studies for agricultural businesses.

No more than once per fiscal year, the VAFA may commission a study and pay the entire cost of the study from VASF if it determines that doing so may avoid duplication of effort or will serve an unmet need. The cost of this study may not exceed \$100,000. **Program costs since FY2014 is \$400,000.00.**

What is the outcome of the \$400,000.00 investment? Are counties using the information? Has any development taken place due to this project? Is the program finished or are there more counties to analyze? How are the landowners involved?

In addition to the site analysis program what is the status of the Value Added Fund as a whole?

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