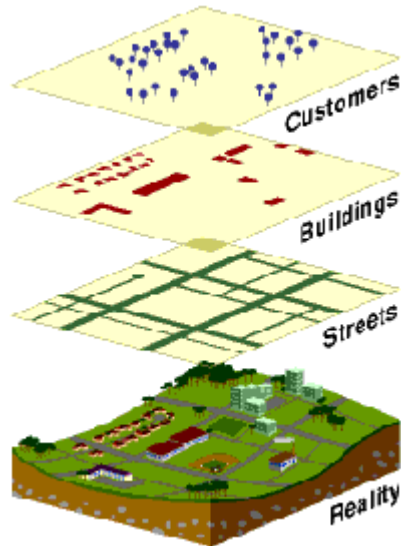**GIS: What Is It and Why Do We Need It?**

Simply put, a GIS (Geographic Information System) combines layers of information about a place to give a better understanding of that place.

GIS is a system of computer hardware, software, data, and personnel to manage, analyze, and present information about a location. GIS links maps to databases and creates a visualization of data, and allows interactivity between the map and the data in a database.

Glenn County is fortunate to have an excellent start with GIS. The initial task of purchasing hardware, software, and data layers is accomplished, and the next phase is to put the tools to beneficial use by various departments within the County.

Some of the projects that we have worked on/with using the GIS have been:

- Supervisor Redistricting
- Voting Precinct Boundary changes
- Zone Changes
- General Plan Amendments
- Williamson Act and Farmland Security Zone Contracts
- LAFCo Annexations
- Watershed Boundaries
- Special Districts
- Confined Livestock Operation Element of the General Plan
- Off-Stream Storage
- Surface Mining and Reclamation Act
- Housing Condition Survey of the County
- Housing Element of the General Plan
- Code Enforcement
- All Planning Cases: maps of projects, soils, special districts, advertised public notices.

We also fulfill requests from the public and private sector for maps and other analytical information regarding Glenn County.

The next phase of GIS development in the County will be to streamline permitting processes, and develop an internet site, where public and private sector individuals may access information. Updating the E-911 emergency response data to GIS format, centerline road identification, will enable this department to cross-reference our data with other departments.