

**To:** Brian Matthews, County Manager

**From:** Lee Jenson, Planning Director

**CC:** Corey Brooks, Director of Procurement & Contract Management

**Date:** 2/25/2026

**Re:** Sole Source / Standardization Exception for 2025 Land Cover and Tree Canopy Dataset

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Union County Planning relies on high-resolution land-cover and tree-canopy datasets to analyze development patterns, measure environmental change, and support long-term planning initiatives. The County previously acquired standardized datasets in 2012 and 2020, both produced using EarthDefine's proprietary artificial intelligence-based classification methodology and delivered through PlanIT Geo.

In 2022, the County issued RFP 2022-055 – GIS Data & Software, a full and competitive IT procurement, to obtain high-resolution multispectral land-cover data and associated mapping products. Following evaluation, PlanIT Geo was selected as the successful vendor, establishing the County's standard for land-cover datasets consistent with the methodology and accuracy requirements defined in the RFP.

To maintain comparability with the 2012 and 2020 datasets—and to preserve continuity with the data standards and analytical methods established through RFP 2022-055—the 2025 dataset must be generated using the same EarthDefine proprietary classification process. EarthDefine is the sole producer of this product, and PlanIT Geo is the exclusive authorized reseller. No other vendor can provide data that is methodologically compatible with the County's prior datasets or capable of supporting accurate decade-over-decade trend analysis.

Using a different vendor would result in incompatible data outputs, disrupt the County's ability to perform multi-year canopy change analysis, and require costly reprocessing or redevelopment of historic datasets.

We are requesting approval to process this purchase as a Sole Source / Standardization in accordance with Section 3.8 of the Union County Procurement Policy, item (ii): *a needed product is available from only one source of supply*. This standardization is necessary to maintain continuity, accuracy, and compatibility across the County's long-term land-cover datasets.

We are requesting approval to submit a request to the BOCC seeking authorization to purchase the 2025 Land Cover and Tree Canopy Dataset from PlanIT Geo in the amount of \$36,216 under the sole source exemption for the reasons listed above. If additional information is needed to assist with processing this request, please let us know.

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Brian Matthews, County Manager: Brian Matthews Date: 2/25/26