



Accurate Carrier Routes

Our clients receive thousands of detailed street maps used for a variety of business management purposes. They require accurate data that is current, and the street data gives them the opportunity to see this.

Clients were seeking postal geographies that were far more accurate and current than those created by other companies. Accuracy and compatibility with their CASS certified programs were their most frequent requests.

With this in mind, we apply our technology and expertise to create the most accurate ZIP Code and Carrier Route boundaries. For over five years, we have produced boundaries as follows:

- updated monthly
- use the same data and systems provided by the US Postal Service to create CASS Certified systems
- truly encapsulate the USPS carrier's walk

Our carrier routes are used for target marketing. They are so accurate that they are used by companies to create their own delivery areas / zones. The USPS is the largest user of our carrier route.

Carrier Route Methodology

The process begins with an inventory of USPS ZIP Code/Carrier Route information. This is acquired from the monthly USPS Address Information Systems (AIS) database and the streets that make up each ZIP Code/Carrier Route.

Our process exhaustively attributes the national street network at the ZIP+4 level. A correspondence file is created which relates the street elements to the USPS postal information. Element names are matched, as well as address ranges. They are then scored. Those elements that have the highest scores offer reference points for enhancing the scores of other elements. This process includes network analysis and graphing techniques. The process also iterates until defining elements have been correlated with a high level of confidence. Those that do not achieve sufficient confidence are investigated. The result of the investigation is enhancement of the automation or addition to a list of exceptions for individual processing.

The creation of boundaries encapsulates / surrounds the actual carrier's walk. Once we have built the database of elements which define each ZIP Code/Carrier Route, the boundaries are assembled. Care is taken so that boundaries will be created that will accurately portray the reality of the USPS delivery system. For instance, when there is a street that is part of the boundary and the postal carrier delivers mail to both sides of the street, the area around that street will be divided up appropriately to assign it to the postal geography.

The methodologies used by other companies to create postal boundaries use the Census Blocks or artificial rectangles to create their postal boundary. They determine the "dominant" carrier route for these polygons. This means that other carrier routes can actually exist in this rectangle, assuring inaccuracies. A conspicuous result in their postal boundaries is that many of them follow the center line of a street. This would imply that a postal carrier only delivers mail to the one side of the street instead of both sides. While this does happen, it does not happen as often as their results imply. It is our intention to only use the center line of a street for the postal boundary when it is the case that the postal carrier only delivers to the one side of the street, and that another postal carrier delivers to the other side.



Figure 1 is an example of our methodology (Red), overlaying the block methodology (Green). You will see in the middle of the image, Carrier Route C012, for the block methodology you will see that it follows along the roads to form the boundary, where as our methodology will show that it is offset from the roads and completely encompassing the road faces where appropriate.

The assembled boundaries are subjected to a Quality Management process.

This process includes:

1. An analysis that identifies any holes (besides the purposely created holes/voids for areas where there is no mail delivery) and overlaps. We exhaustively and mutually exclusively create the set of boundaries.
2. Samples of the boundaries are selected to further validate the creation process.
3. A Corrective Action provides enhancement to the automation process or add a member on the list of exceptions. Corrections are implemented automatically or through a manual editing process.

The USPS at several organizational levels, including Postmasters, has used and reviewed our carrier route boundaries. They confirm that they are accurate.

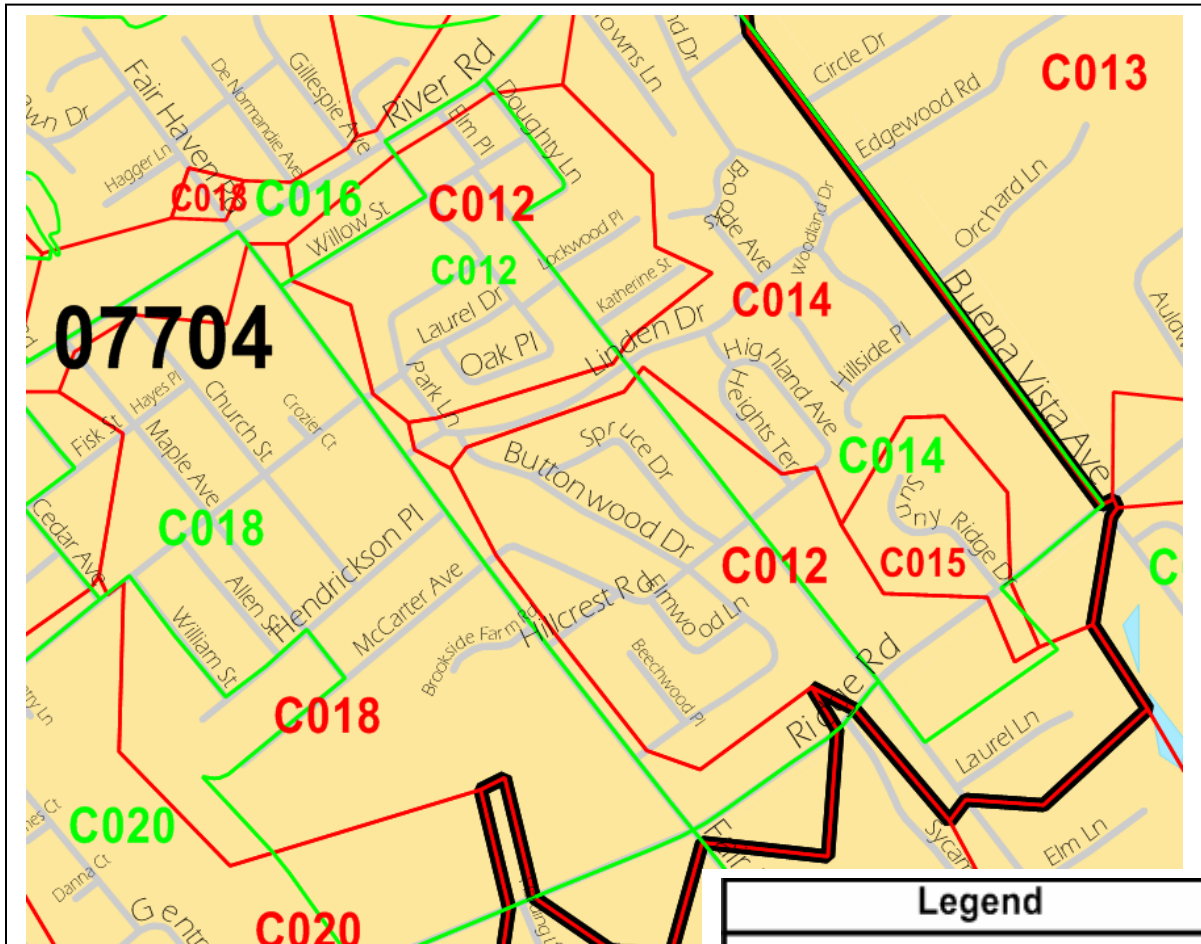


Figure 1 - Carrier Route boundary example

