Guidelines to Waterfront Properties

These guidelines are intended to help compliance personnel evaluate whether or not properties are Lakefront, Channel/Canal Front, Across the Road from Lake/Ocean and Waterfront with Home Across the Road. Additionally, agents and brokers can use these to help determine which of the Waterfront features should be selected when listing a property.

Guidelines for determination may vary from County to County, the writer is going by Lake County criteria.

The importance of correctly identifying a property's location is value, agent integrity and proper appraisal. Properties with homes that are on the lakefront command higher values than those that have a home that is separated from the lake by a road.

When agents take clients to a property that they believe to be lakefront and then find out that is not the case they lose integrity with their customers and it can be a waste of time.

Appraisal values can be skewed if appraisers use properties as lakefront when they are not.

Lakefront

There are two criteria that need to be considered:

1. Does the lot extend directly into the lake?
2. If the property contains a structure, i.e. a house, mobile home, commercial building, as the main structure, is that structure located on the lake without a road in-between it and the lake?

Steps

1. View the street map with the listing and look for pin placement. If it is obvious that the pin is not on the lake front then conceivably that would be the determination.
2. As a second step, click on the map in the listing and use the Bird's eye view. This view shows the lot lines and the building location. If the home is on the lakeside of the lot and the lot line extends into the lake, then it is lake front.
3. If there are still concerns, then use Realist Tax and access the assessor's map to help make the determination.
4. Other steps that might be helpful are to examine the photos supplied with the listing and to read the agent description in the Remarks.
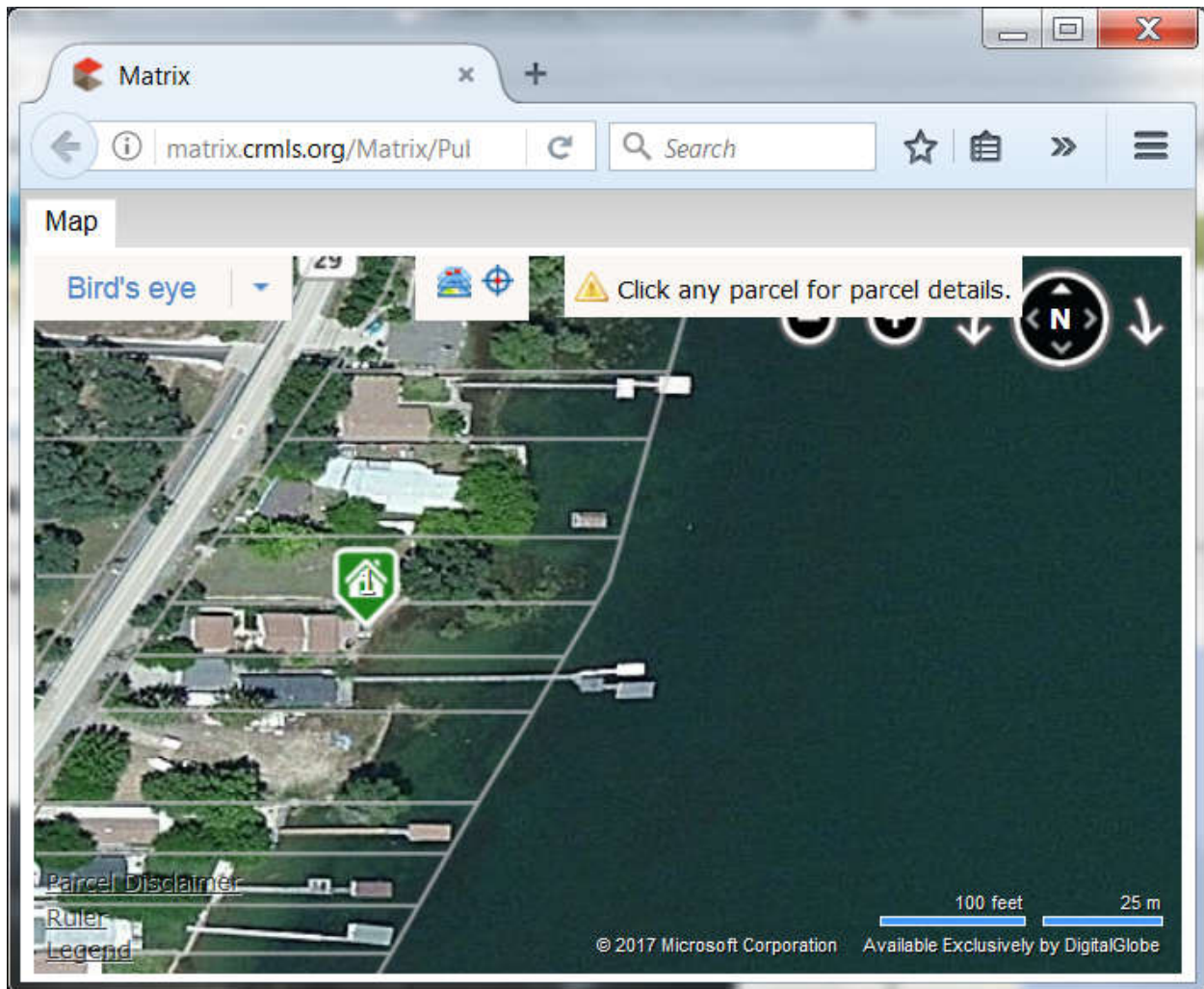
Lot Extension

If the property line extends out and another land mass other than an island is in-between the property line then the property is NOT lakefront.
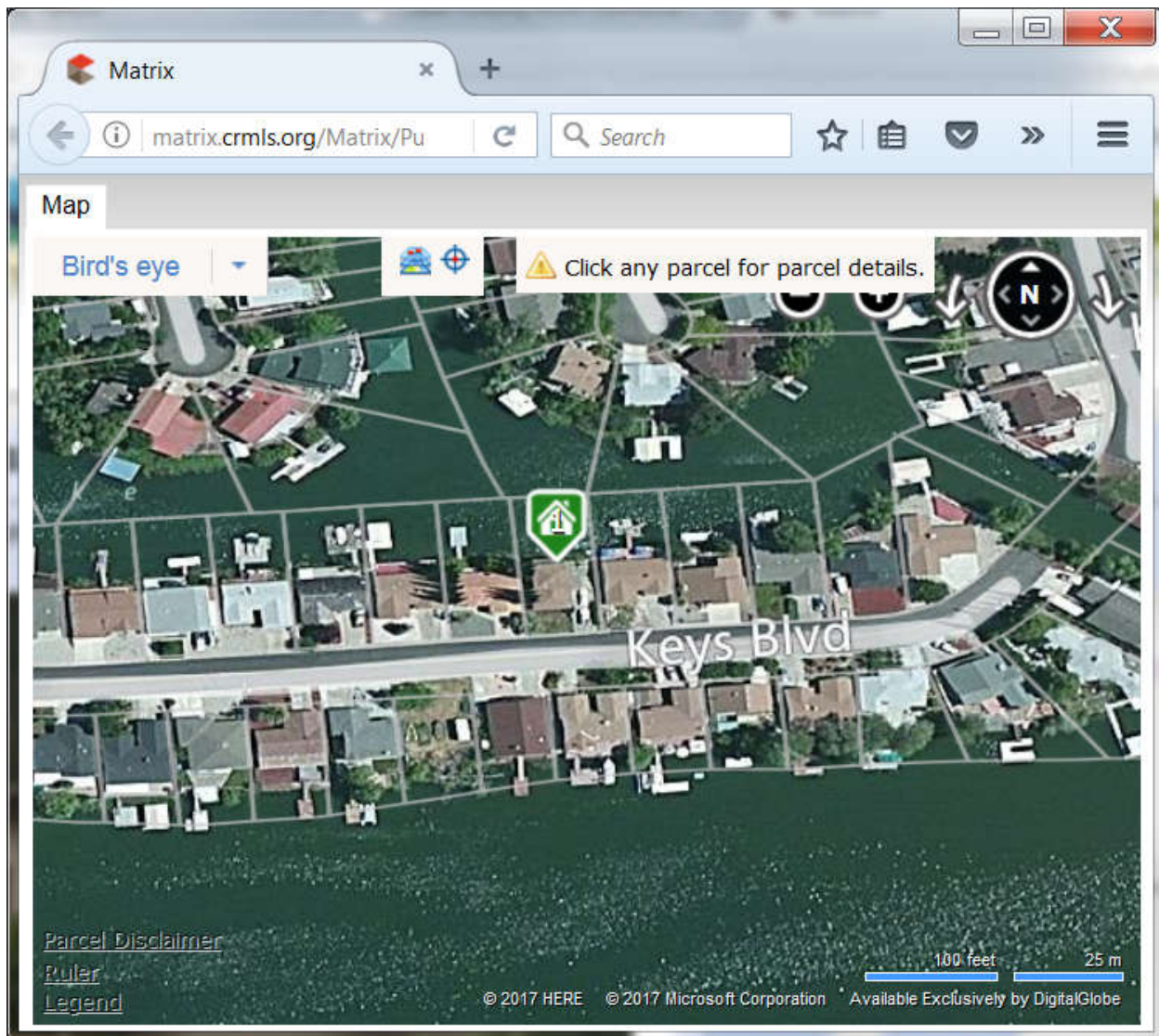
Structures

If a road is in-between the structure and the lake, then it is NOT lakefront.

EXAMPLE of Lakefront properties:

This property extends directly out to the lake and the home is on the lakeside of the road.

EXAMPLE OF NOT LAKEFRONT

The lot is extending into a channel/canal, not into the lake therefore it is not Lakefront (it is channel/canal front).

Channel/Canal Front

Often times a property will be on a channel or canal, but the lot line does not extend into the lake (it extends into a channel). The process for determining this is the same as lakefront.

1. Does the lot line extend into a channel or canal?
2. Is the building in question across a road from the channel?

Steps

1. View the street map with the listing and look for pin placement. If it is obvious that the pin is not on the channel front then conceivably that would be the determination.

2. As a second step, click on the map in the listing and use the Bird's eye view. This view shows the lot lines and the building location. If the home is on the channel side of the lot and the lot line extends into the channel, then it is channel front. If there is a road in between the structure and the channel then it is NOT channel front.
3. If there are still concerns, then use Realist Tax and access the assessor's map to help make the determination.
4. Other steps that might be helpful are to examine the photos supplied with the listing and to read the agent description in the Remarks.

Example of Channel Front

Channel front viewed via street map.
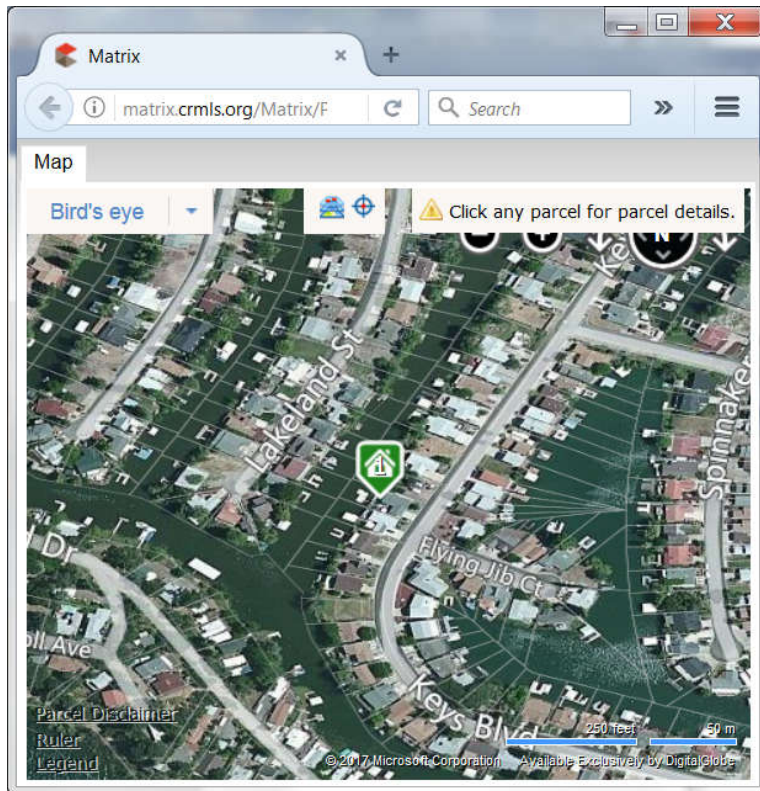
Same property viewed with Bird's eye.

Across the Road from Lake/Ocean

This description refers to the location of the house, mobile home, commercial building, etc. The value of a home that is across a road from the lake will vary from those that are lakefront. The type of road will influence potential buyers, for example a highway versus a residential street.

The methods for determining whether or not the home is across the road from the lake are very similar to those used for Lakefront and Channel Front. Using the street map may not be all that helpful, but using the Birds eye view should be.

1. Is there a road in between the home and the lake?
2. Is there another lot between the home and the road?

With regards to number 2 above, if there is a lot between the lot the home is on and the road, then it does not qualify for across the road from the lake.

From time to time there will be listings that include two lots, one with the home on it and one without a home. The ultimate test is where the home is located. If the home is across the road from the lake and the additional lot is lakefront, then the proper description is Across the Road from the Lake. The key factor is the location of the home.

Steps

1. View the street map with the listing and look for pin placement. If it is obvious that the pin is placed on a lot (with a home) across a road from the lake then conceivably that would be the determination. In most cases though the Birds eye will need to be used.

2. As a second step, click on the map in the listing and use the Bird's eye view. This view shows the lot lines and the building location. If the home is across a road from the lake and even if the lot extends across the road and into the lake it is considered Across the Road from the Lake, although in a case like this the proper description would be Waterfront with Home Across the Road. For this case using both descriptors would be acceptable.
3. If there are still concerns, then use Realist Tax and access the assessor's map to help make the determination.
4. Other steps that might be helpful are to examine the photos supplied with the listing and to read the agent description in the Remarks.

Example of Across the Road from the Lake
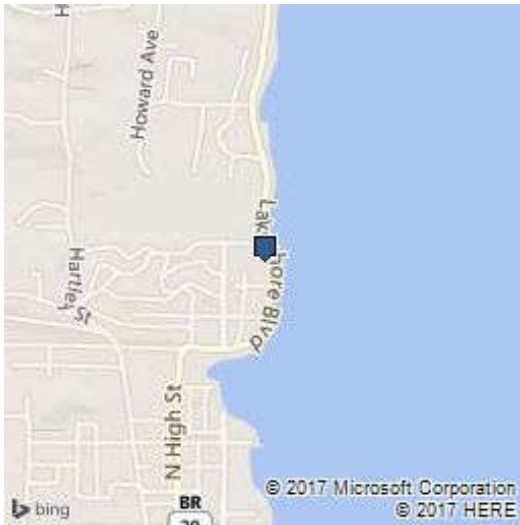
Street map view of Across the Road from the Lake
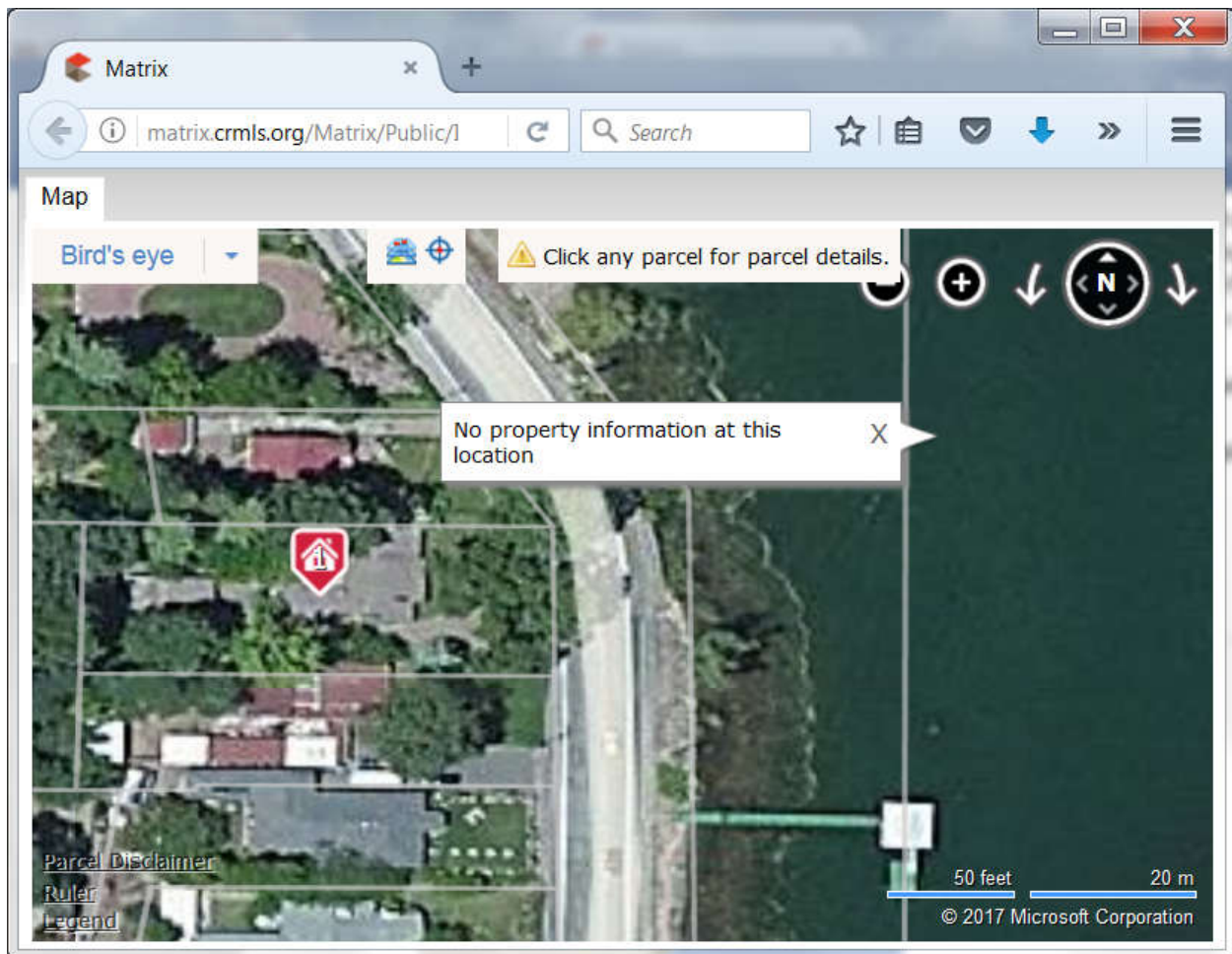
Birds eye view of the same property.

Waterfront with Home Across the Road

The original intent of this descriptor was to describe the case when a single lot starts across the road from the lake and spans across the road and onto the lakefront. However, in Lake County, there does not appear to be many of these cases. There do appear to be many cases of two lots being sold together with the home on the lot across the road from the lake and the second lot is directly across the road from the lot with the home. This would be a more practical use of the descriptor. There are also some rare cases where the lakefront lot is not directly across the road from the lot with the home.

1. Is the home across the road from the lake?
2. Is a lakefront lot also be included in the listing?

If there are any separate lots between the home and the road, then it does not qualify for the across the road from the lake criteria. The steps are for making a determination are:

Steps

1. View the street map with the listing and look for pin placement. If it is obvious that the pin is placed on a lot (with a home) across the road then it may be a candidate, but step 2 would be necessary in making a final determination.
2. As a second step, click on the map in the listing and use the Bird's eye view. If the home is on the lot across the road from the lake and the second lot is lakefront, then it qualifies.
3. If there are still concerns, then use Realist Tax and access the assessor's map to help make the determination.
4. Other steps that might be helpful are to examine the photos supplied with the listing and to read the agent description in the Remarks.

The pin seems to indicate that the lot with the home is across the road from the lake.
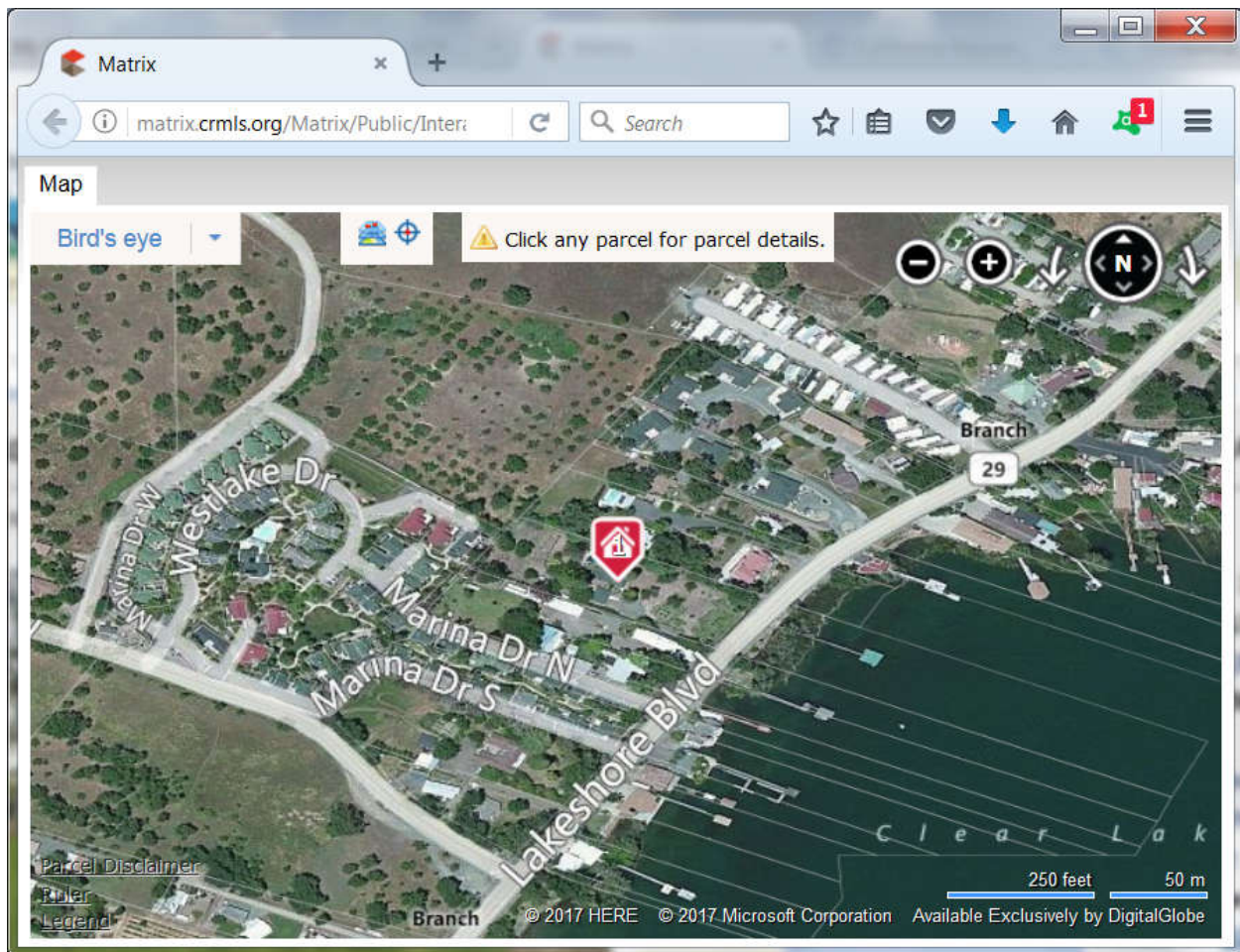
This is the bird'eye view of the street map above. In this case there are two separate lots, one with the home across the road from the lake and a waterfront lot. The listing was for both lots. Note the second lot has a dock which might make it unreasonable to sell these separately.