

Massachusetts Department of Revenue
Division of Local Services



CREATING AND USING
PID FILES
RPIS VERSION 3

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Using IQ Objects to Create a PID file

Introduction

What is a PID file?

A PID (Parcel ID) file is a file containing a list of parcel IDs. This file can be used by any RPIS program to process multiple parcels without the need for typing each map/block/lot identifier into the Parcel Selection screen.

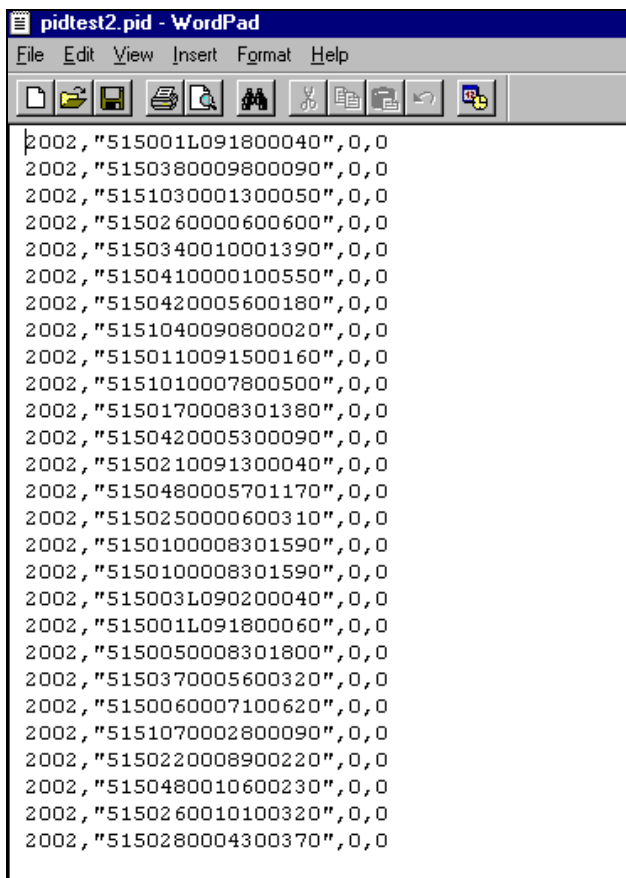


Figure 1 – a Version 2 PID file

Why use a PID file?

Whenever you run a program in RPIS you must specify the parcels to be processed. The program will process the parcel IDs in the order in which they appear in the Parcel ID Selection screen (if a range is entered, all parcels within the range will be processed, from lowest to highest ID.) You have three options for adding parcels to the Parcel ID Selection screen:

1. Type the parcel IDs individually – the best choice for only a few parcels.
2. Type a range of parcels – good choice if *all parcels within the range* should be processed. Not a good choice if there are parcels within the range you wish to exclude.
3. Use a PID file.

PID files are used:

1. Whenever it is necessary to run a program on specific parcels that cannot be listed individually, or
2. Whenever it is necessary to process parcels in a specific order other from lowest to highest parcel ID, or
3. Whenever it is necessary to process parcels that have something in common, such as street name, use code, building style or other unique characteristic

Common examples of situations requiring use of a PID file include:

- Running the Cost program on residential parcels only
- Running Value Finalization on all properties containing chapter land
- Printing Detailed Parcel Listings for only those parcels that sold in a certain month and year
- Generating an LA4 using a PID file of active parcels in a specific year.

Creating a PID File

PID files are created using the IQ Objects report module. The FreeForm design window is used to place four required data columns (parcel year, unformatted parcel ID, year of sale and month of sale) in a specific order; optional filters and sorting instructions can also be applied to the query before creating the PID file. Follow the instructions below to design and generate a PID file using IQ Objects.

Note: it is possible to accomplish a task in IQ Objects using several different methods. The following set of instructions suggests one way to open and use the FreeForm design window to build a procedure; if you are familiar with IQ Objects you can follow the intent of the instructions while using alternate methods to complete the procedure.

The main steps to creating a PID file in IQ Objects are:

1. Start a new document in the FreeForm design window
2. Place the columns Parcel_Year, Parcel_ID_Unfmt (unformatted), Year_Of_Sale, and Month_Of_Sale in the Detail section of the query document
3. (optional) Apply filters and/or sorting instructions to the query document
4. Create the PID file by using the Export utility

These steps will be described in detail below.

Step-by-step instructions:

1. Start IQ Objects by clicking **Start > Programs > Sigma Systems > IQ Objects** (or, if you have a Desktop icon for IQ Objects, double-click the Desktop icon.)
2. On the IQ Objects menu bar click **File > New** to begin a new procedure.
3. In the New Document dialog box click the radio button to the left of "FreeForm". The boxes next to "Create TM1 Cube" and "Use Wizard" should be blank; if they are checked, click each box to clear the check mark. Click **OK** to accept the document settings.

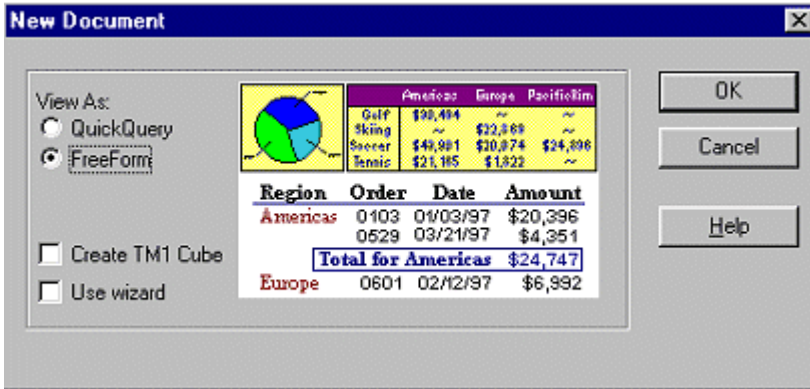


Figure 2 - the New Document dialog box

The FreeForm design window will appear.

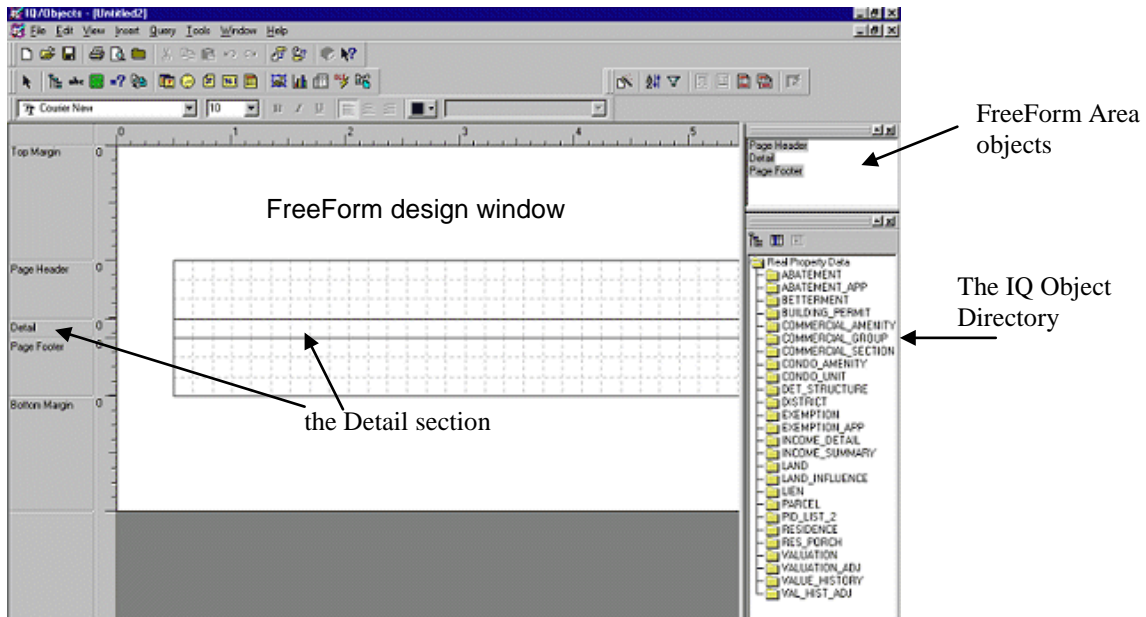


Figure 3 – the FreeForm design window

4. In the Object Directory panel, double-click the Parcel folder to display its contents.
5. Use the scroll bar to scroll down the column list until PARCEL_YEAR is displayed.
6. Drag the PARCEL_YEAR column to the left margin of the Detail section, then release the mouse button. Don't worry if the field is not quite at the left margin – spacing is not critical (this is a change from RPIS Version 1.)
7. In the Object Directory panel, find PARCEL_ID_UNFMT and drag it into the FreeForm design window; drop it just to the right of PARCEL_YEAR.

8. In the Object Directory panel, find YEAR_OF_SALE and drag it into the FreeForm design window; drop it just to the right of PARCEL_ID_UNFMT.
9. In the Object Directory panel, find MONTH_OF_SALE and drag it into the FreeForm design window; drop it just to the right of YEAR_OF_SALE.
10. After all columns have been selected and placed in the Detail section, the FreeForm design window should look something like this:

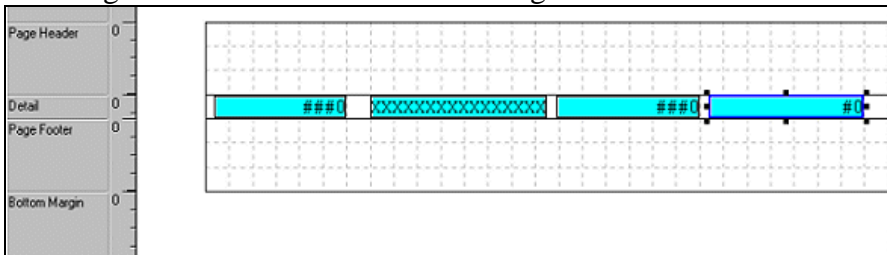


Figure 4 – the completed Detail section

Note: if you use the “Insert Column” method to add the four required columns rather than using the Object Directory method described above, you will need to delete or hide the text fields that appear in the Header section after you insert the columns.

Filtering a PID File

Filters can be applied to the data in order to select specific parcels from the database. To apply a filter follow these steps:

1. On the menu bar click **Query > Filter**. The Filter/Sort Order dialog box appears.

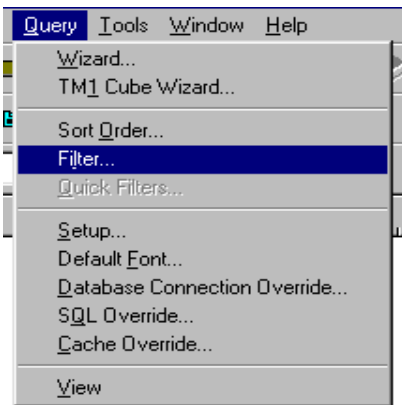


Figure 5 – the Query menu

11. Select a PID file column from the Objects list, or click the Columns button to see a list of all tables in the database. (Double-click a table name to display its data columns.)

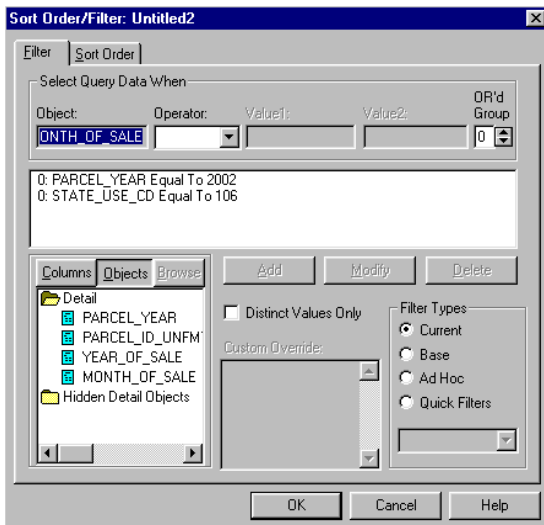


Figure 6 – the Filter dialog box

12. Double-click a data column to place it in the Object box in the “Select Query Data When” area.
13. Select an operator and enter the desired value(s) to compare against the data column.
14. Click the Add button to add the statement to the filter.
15. Repeat steps 3 through 6 to add additional filter statements.
16. Click the OK button to apply the filter(s) to your data.

Notes:

- *All IQ Objects queries should include a filter statement selecting a particular parcel year; this is especially important for PID files, to avoid having the same parcel ID appear more than once in the list.*
- *If you select a column from the database that is not part of the PID file, IQ Objects will place the column in a “hidden page” in the design window. Columns in a hidden area will not be exported but you can view them in the Area object directory as shown below.*

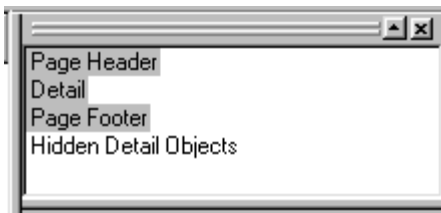


Figure 7 – the Area Object directory

Sorting a PID File

IQ Objects will order the parcel IDs in the PID file from lowest ID to highest. To order the list of parcels in any other order you must include sorting instructions in your query.

Sorting by Parcel Year or Month/Year of Sale

Follow these instructions to sort the PID file by one of its columns:

1. On the menu bar, click **Query > Sort Order**. The Sort Order/Filter dialog box appears.

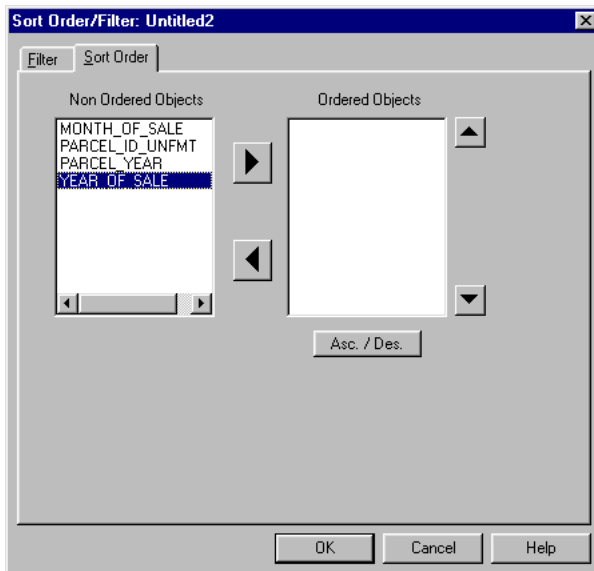


Figure 8- the Sort Order dialog box

2. All the columns appearing in your query will be listed in alphabetical order in the left-hand Non Ordered Objects box. To sort by a particular column, click once on a column name to select it, then click the right arrow button (or simply double-click the column) to move it to the right-hand Ordered Objects box. Data will be sorted by all columns in the Ordered Objects box, in the order in which the columns appear (from top to bottom.)
3. To change the sort order, select a column in the Ordered Objects box and use the up/down arrows to the right of the Ordered Objects box to move the column up or down the list.

Note: all sorts are done in ascending order by default. To change a column to descending sort order, select the column and click the Asc./Des. button. (You must select and change each column separately.)

Sorting by Columns not in the PID file

A query can only be sorted by columns that are part of the query; that said, however, it is possible to sort a PID file by a database column that is part of the query but will not appear in the final product (called a “hidden” column.) This requires a few extra steps as outlined below.

Once all columns have been added to your PID query you must add any fields you wish to sort by; these columns will then be marked as “hidden” so they do not appear in your PID file. We will use Owner_Name_1 as an example.

1. In the Object Directory panel, double-click the Parcel folder icon to display its contents.
2. Use the scroll bar to scroll down the column list until OWNER_NAME_1 is displayed. Drag OWNER_NAME_1 into the FreeForm design window and drop it (by releasing the mouse button) anywhere in the Header section (it will not appear in your query so it doesn't matter where you place the column.)

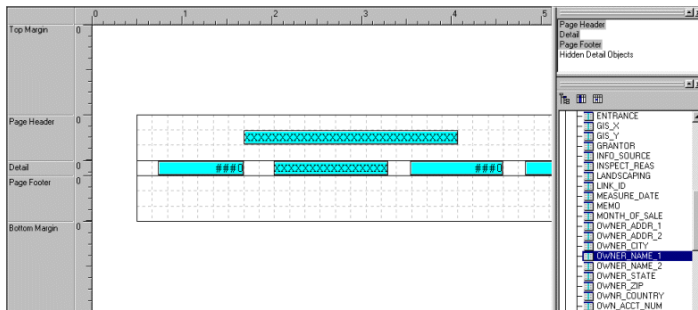


Figure 9 – adding OWNER_NAME_1 to the Header

3. Double-click on the OWNER_NAME_1 column to open its Attributes dialog box.

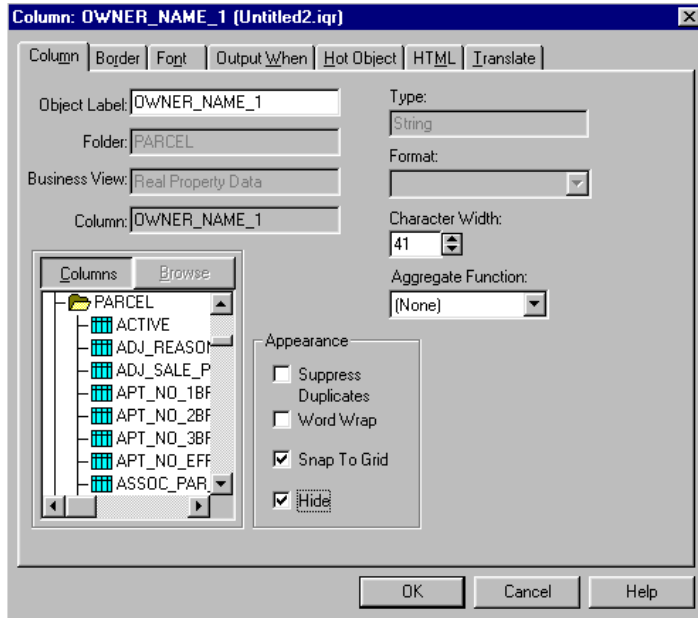


Figure 10 – Owner_Name_1 column Attributes dialog box

4. In the Attributes dialog box there is a check box labeled “Hide” in the Appearance section (see the illustration above.) Check the Hide box to make OWNER_NAME_1 a hidden field, then click OK.

5. Repeat these steps to add additional hidden fields to your query if desired.

You may now open the Sort dialog box and use the hidden field(s) to sort your query.

Removing Sort Order

To remove sorting instructions from your query:

- Select a column to remove from your sort.
- Click the left arrow button to return the column to the Non Ordered Objects box.
- When all columns have been returned to the Non Ordered Objects box, the sort instructions will have been removed and your data will appear in PARCEL-ID order by default. Click the OK button to complete the process.

Note: because Parcel ID order is the default sort, assigning a new sort by PARCEL_ID_UNFMT will also return to data to its original state.

Exporting the File

Once the FreeForm query has been designed the next step is to export the data to a file. Follow the instructions below to export the data.

1. Click **File > Export** from the IQ top level menu.

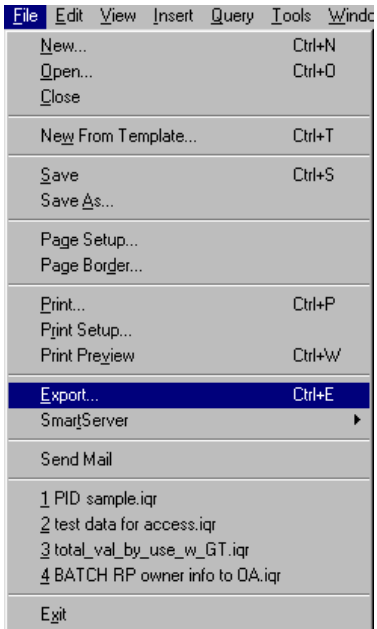


Figure 11 – File > Export menu

The Export dialog box will open.

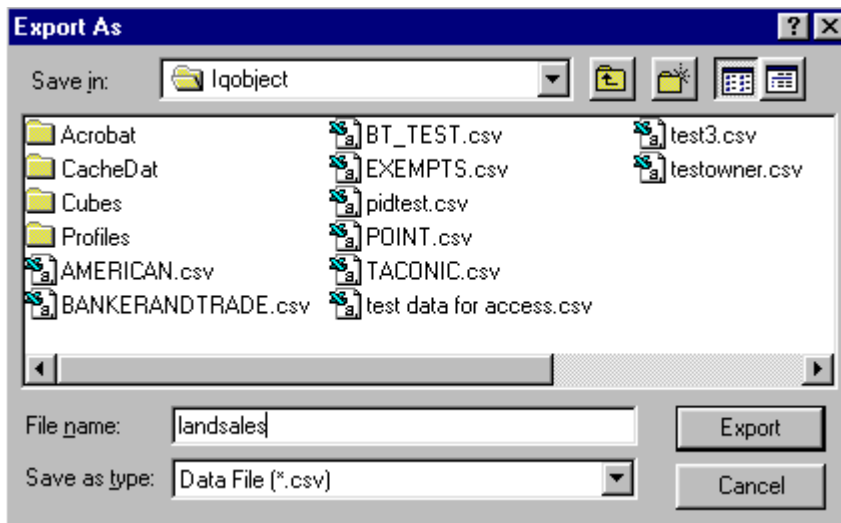


Figure 12 – the Export dialog box

2. Specify the filename, file location and file type as follows:
 - Decide where to store the PID file, then use the Save In: pull-down list to specify that location.
Note: A good choice would be the Sigma\Rpiswork folder, since that is the location all RPIS programs look first for data.
 - Enter a name for your PID file in the File Name: box; choose something that will accurately describe the contents and intent of the file, like LAND SALES or 101_RES. Spaces are allowed, but do not use symbols like * or \$ (hyphens – and underscores _ are permitted) and do not exceed 15 characters in length.
 - Change the file type to “Data File (*.CSV)” by using the Save as Type: pull-down list.
3. After specifying the file location, name and type, click the Export button to run the query and export the data to the file.

Optional steps

Save the query. If you save a basic PID file query you can then use it as a basis for future PID files. To save the PID query, click **File > Save** to open the Save dialog box; enter a location and name for your stored query, then click OK.

Change the file extension of the exported file. Because the export type was CSV, the filename will end with the CSV extension. RPIS expects PID files to end in PID. The file can be renamed by using Windows Explorer so that it ends with PID; this is optional because it is also possible to rename the file in the RPIS Parcel Selection screen (the process will be described later in this user guide.)

Using PID files in RPIS

Loading a PID file into the Oracle database

Once a PID file has been created and exported using IQ Objects, one more step remains. PID files must be loaded into a table in the Oracle database before they can be used; once the Oracle database is made “aware” of a PID file’s existence, it will offer that PID file as an option whenever the Parcel ID Selection screen is opened.

Note: Oracle maintains a separate PID table list for each RPIS user. PID files can be shared by all users if you have the proper system permission to use another person’s files. See your system administrator if you have trouble accessing shared files.

Follow these steps to load a PID file into Oracle’s PID Table:

1. Enter the DMT module and access the Parcel ID Selection screen from any program (Cost, Reports, etc.). This screen is available from many menus; for example, one way to access it is to click Reports > Parcel Listing and then click the Select Parcels button.

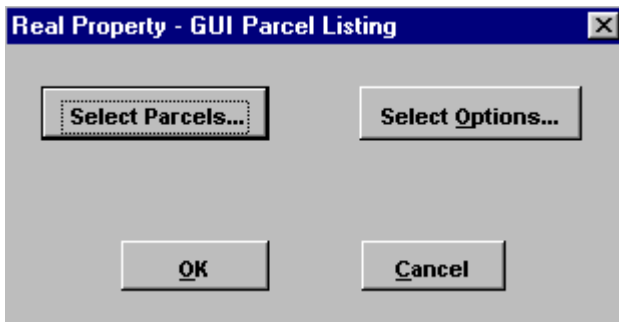


Figure 13 –the Select Parcels button

The Parcel ID Selection screen opens. It may contain an existing list of parcels or it may be blank; to clear all existing entries, click the New button at the bottom of the screen. Any existing entries or PID files will be removed and a blank parcel selection screen will be displayed.

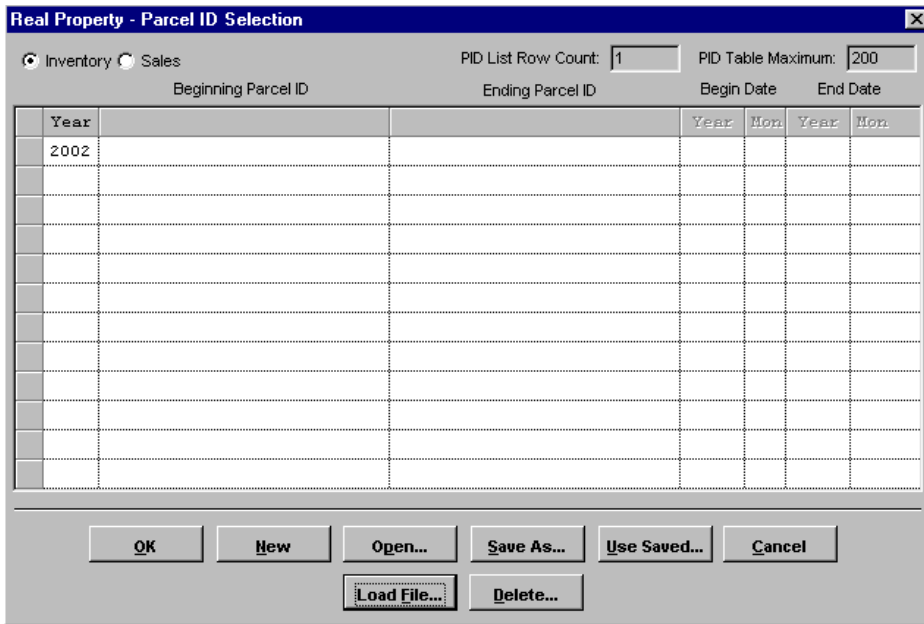


Figure 14 – a blank Parcel ID Selection screen

- To load a new PID file into the Oracle PID Table, click the Load File button at the bottom of the screen. The Select PID File to Load... dialog box will appear.

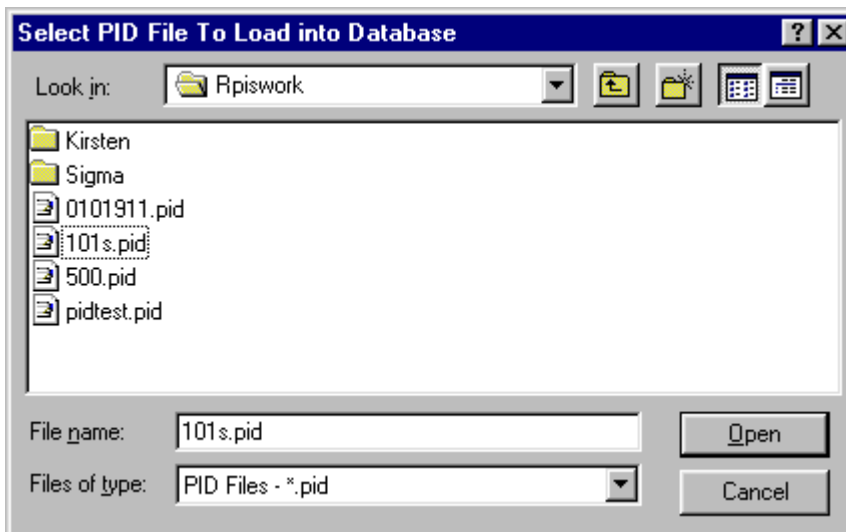


Figure 15 – the Select PID File to Load into Database dialog box

- The default file type is “PID Files” – only files ending in the extension PID will be displayed. To find a file with a CSV extension click the “Files of type:” drop-down list and select ALL files (*.*).
Select the PID file you wish to load and click the Open button.
The PID Table – Create From File dialog box will appear.

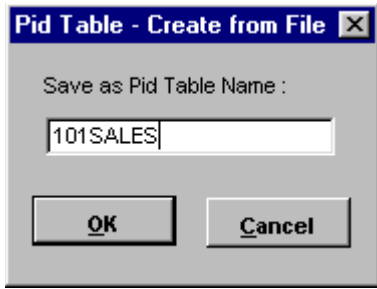


Figure 16 – PID Table Create dialog box

4. You may rename your PID file before it is stored in the PID Table or you may load the PID file with its existing name. Enter a new filename if you wish, then click the OK button.

The PID file will be loaded into your PID Table and will now be available for use in the Parcel Selection screen.

Using a PID File

Once a PID file has been loaded into the PID Table it can be opened and used in any RPIS program. To open a PID file:

1. Click the Open button at the bottom of the Parcel ID Selection screen.



Figure 17 – Open PID Table dialog box

2. Select a PID table from your account, or from another user's account, and click OK. The PID file will be loaded into the Parcel ID Selection screen.

A note about large PID files...

In Version 1 of the RPIS application there was a 99 parcel limit attached to the Parcel ID Selection screen. Using a PID file containing more than 99 parcels resulted in the message “File too big for Selbuild”, meaning the parcel IDs could not be displayed in the Parcel ID Selection screen. RPIS Version 2 allows much larger limits. This option was configured when Version 2 was installed; the default limit is 200 lines but this number can be changed (in the Local Options screen in the Utilities module.)

If the PID file you wish to use exceeds the currently configured limit you will see this message:

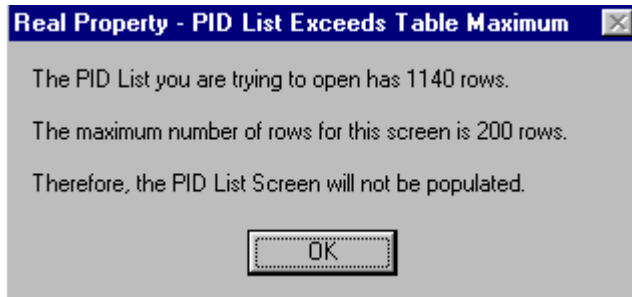


Figure 18 – message regarding large PID lists

The PID file will still be opened and used – the message just explains that the parcel IDs will not be displayed in the Parcel ID Selection screen. You can verify that your file is being used by looking at the PID file Row Count indicator in the top right corner of the Parcel ID Selection screen. The number of parcels in your PID file should be indicated in this box.

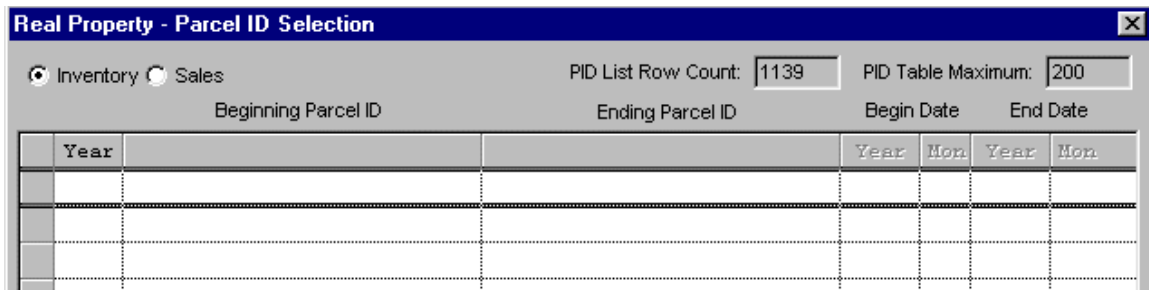


Figure 19 – PID List Row Count display

If your PID file contains less than the defined limit of rows, the parcel IDs will be displayed in the Parcel ID Selection screen as illustrated below.

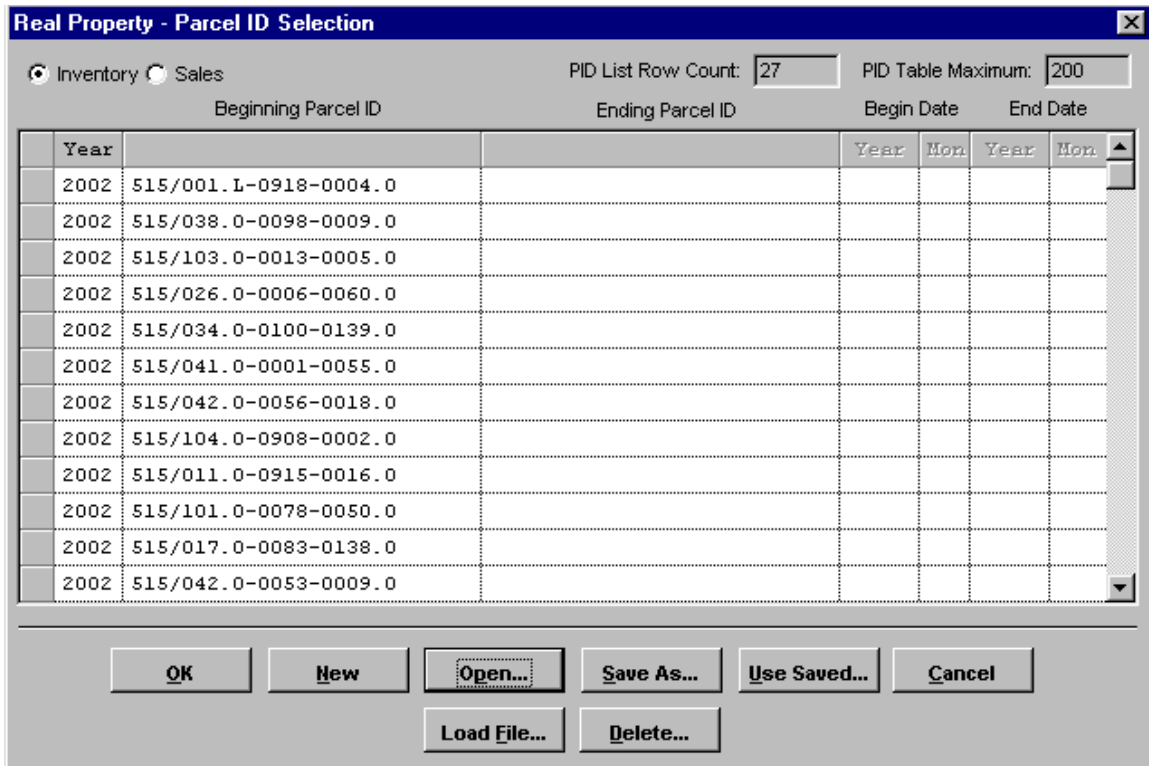


Figure 20 – sample PID list with less than the maximum rows for display

The Use Saved button: this button lets you bypass the error message that occurs when you use a large PID list that exceeds the maximum limit of the Parcel ID Selection screen. When you select a PID list by using the Use Saved button, RPIS does not attempt to load the list into the Parcel ID Selection screen; it simply accepts the PID List without trying to display it and returns you to your previous screen. Using this button saves time whenever you need to use a very large PID list.

For training and technical support...

Contact any of the DLS IT Information Technology Staff for further assistance or to ask about training opportunities.

DLS IT Support Help Desk
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CAMA Version 3 User Guides, our Support Guidelines and other useful information from the Information Technology section of the Division of Local Services can be found online at <http://www.mass.gov/dls>. Information about the Community Software Consortium can be found online at csc-cloud.us.

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