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Project Title: Commonwealth of Virginia Five Year GIS Strategic Plan

Final report

Organization: Virginia Information Technologies Agency, 11751 Meadowville Lane, Chester, VA 23836 <http://www.vita.virginia.gov/isp>

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Collaborating Organizations: none

Executive Summary

The Virginia Five Year GIS Strategic Plan was successfully developed as a stakeholder driven plan through a process that provided multiple opportunities for input and guidance from the GIS community (local/state/federal government, non-profit, private and academia) in Virginia. Stakeholder interviews, regional town hall meetings, online surveys, public comment periods, and VGIN Advisory Board involvement all contributed to a positive outcome for the strategic planning effort. The outcomes included a common Vision Statement, three Strategic Goals and six Strategic Initiatives.

Vision: "Using Geographic Knowledge to Create a Better Virginia"

Strategic Goals:

1. Coordination and Collaboration: Provide greater coordination and facilitate collaboration within the geospatial community
2. Communication: Increase communication and outreach to the general public, decision makers, and the geospatial community
3. Creative Services: Continue to create a platform for spatial solutions in the Commonwealth

Strategic Initiatives:

1. Develop and maintain geospatial standards
2. Oversee the development of a Commonwealth-wide geospatial clearinghouse that connects all levels of government and other VGIN stakeholders
3. Facilitate geospatial educational opportunities
4. Provide marketing advocacy and outreach by acting as the primary champion of GIS in Virginia
5. Provide framework basemap data layers to augment the current orthophotography and road centerline data layers
6. Identify and develop innovative technical solutions

These inputs are providing guidance to VGIN as we establish our priorities for the coming biennium as well as the longer five year view.

Project Narrative

In 2009 VGIN developed a five year strategic plan that identified goals in three areas: 1) completion of all framework data layers including sustainability plans; 2) identification, prioritization and planning for the development of the most commonly needed geospatial services (e.g. web/geoprocessing and process services); 3) maturity modeling for the Geospatial Enterprise Platform data repository as the “go to” location for Virginia GIS data and/or information. These goals were aligned with our state information technology strategic goals and our state public safety goals. Residing in the Virginia Information Technologies Agency, VGIN is tightly coupled organizationally with the state E911 coordinating body through the Integrated Services Program. This partnership provides unique opportunities to meet the overlapping business needs of GIS, public safety and information technology, while at the same time allowing the furtherance of broader GIS needs in the Commonwealth. The CAP grant for strategic planning provided assistance to VGIN with the further integration of the State Spatial Data Infrastructure (SSDI) needs with the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) needs and the continued integration of the strategic visions of the Integrated Services Program.

In June 2009 the consulting services of Touchstone, LLC were brought on board to assist with the GIS Strategic Planning effort. Touchstone also assisted with the development of Virginia’s 911 Comprehensive Plan (a part of the Integrated Services Program) as well as the Commonwealth Interoperability Strategic Plan (Office of Commonwealth Preparedness). Synergies amongst the three plans are important to the mission of the Integrated Services Program.

Approximately 30 key stakeholders representing federal, state, and local government, academia, non-profit and private sector were interviewed in August 2009. In September and October a series of five Town Hall meetings were held across the Commonwealth

- Culpeper
- Richmond
- Abingdon (webinar)
- Roanoke
- Hampton Roads

Concurrently, an online survey was provided to provide additional opportunities for feedback. Through the Stakeholder interviews, Town Hall meetings, and the online survey, multiple opportunities for input were created.

A draft GIS Strategic Plan was developed in the October to November timeframe, resulting in a two week public comment period for the first two weeks of December. All available communication means were utilized to spread the word about this opportunity for final input. The process resulted in additional adjustments and corrections to the final draft plan. Once all public comment was received and incorporated into the draft plan, a final plan was prepared and presented to the VGIN Advisory Board for ratification at their January 6, 2010 quarterly meeting. A motion to approve was made and the Strategic Plan was unanimously accepted by the VGIN Advisory Board 01/06/2010.

Next Steps

This plan will be providing inputs to the update of the VITA Integrated Services Program Business Plan, the program that manages the coordination of Public Safety Communications and GIS within VITA.

Calendar year 2010 will be utilized by VGIN to digest the plan and develop strategies for implementation. Three areas are being addressed through this effort:

1. Establishing a Strategic Process
2. Proposing a Strategic Structure
3. Prioritization

The Strategic Process will include the development of implementation strategies; the identification of “champions” in each strategic initiative, where possible; leverage interest from stakeholders where VGIN resources may be lacking, and continue to utilize the VGIN Advisory Board as the Executive Steering Committee.

The Structure will establish Framework Initiative Action Teams (FIATs) for each framework theme and other prioritized initiatives identified in the strategic plan, as needed. Each workgroup will develop a charter and prioritized work plan, with coordination provided by VGIN. The VGIN Advisory Board will receive progress reports at the Board meetings. Each FIAT will develop standards for their respective area, with the objective of moving expeditiously on practical statewide standards that will support inputs and outputs to the geospatial clearinghouse.

The Prioritization effort will be done with the assumption that resources will be limited over the next five years. Quarterly milestones will be established with associated resources. As always, input and guidance from the VGIN Advisory Board will be sought.

Feedback on Cooperative Agreements Program

The FGDC CAP program is an excellent program for assisting states with strategic planning and thought processes. The greatest value derived is that a consistent nationwide approach to state strategic planning is achieved. As states mature in developing and executing their plans, the CAP program needs to grow with them. The shift to business planning and return on investment studies is indicative of this.