

**Final Project Report – Award Number G11AC20046,  
Category 4: Fifty States Initiative  
Business Plan Development and Implementation**

**Date:** November 30, 2012

**Agreement No:** G11AC20046

**Project Title:** Louisiana Business Plan for Statewide Address Management

**Organization:** Louisiana Geographic Information Center (LAGIC)

**Principal Investigator:** Craig Johnson, Director of LAGIC

**Collaborating Organizations:** Louisiana Chapter of the National Emergency Numbering Association, and the Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness

### **Executive Summary**

What started as an effort to create a Statewide Address Maintenance Business Plan and persuade local addressing authorities to use the FGDC approved United States Thoroughfare, Landmark, and Postal Address Data Standard; became a search for the tools necessary to assist local government create address data that would meet that standard.

We started the project with a 23 question online survey on local addressing practices that we distributed to all 64 parishes (counties). We found that roughly a third of all parishes had no Geographic Information System (GIS) and no digital address data. Therefore, we created a webpage for these parishes so that they could go online and add, modify and delete their address data using an online map interface and requiring only a web browser.

We realized that the transition from analog to digital data required by Next Generation 9-1-1 technology would necessitate Communication Districts storing their data in a geospatial format. We hosted two Next Generation 9-1-1 Workshops, to educate Communication District officials on the importance of address data standards and the need for the greater locational accuracy that is provided by point addressing rather than address ranges.

We presented the results of this work at the annual Louisiana GIS Workshop, the URISA/NENA Addressing Conference and the Louisiana Chapter of NENA's Annual Symposium. In addition to these outreach efforts, we assisted the Louisiana GIS Council form an address data subcommittee that unanimously adopted the FGDC Approved Address Data Standard and delivered the GIS Council's resolution to the State CIO for his review.

## Project Narrative

### Summary of Project Activities and Key Accomplishments to Date

The goal of the participating organizations was to develop a plan for a statewide address management. Among the project activities and key project accomplishments were:

- Fifty eight of the sixty four parish (90.6%) Communication Districts participated in an online survey to inventory current address maintenance practices. Our primary focus has been the Louisiana 911 community because of their central role as custodians of the address data layer.
- The survey results were presented to the Louisiana Chapter of NENA at their annual symposium in Marksville, LA. and at two regional meetings of the Louisiana Chapter of NENA as well as the URISA/NENA Addressing Workshop and the annual Louisiana Remote Sensing and GIS workshop.
- In response to the suggestions of the Communication District Directors, we developed an online address maintenance tool for parishes without GIS software or GIS technical capacity. The online tool, which only requires the parish to have a web browser, is currently being used by two rural parishes (counties); Jackson and Union.
- LAGIC began a Pilot Address Project in the small rural parish of West Carroll, with a population of approximately 10,000. We were able to estimate how long it would take to point address an entire parish using a combination of online tools, aerial imagery and local knowledge.
- LAGIC hosted two Next Generation 9-1-1 workshops for 36 Communication District officials. The workshops emphasized the importance of digital address data and geospatial technologies as Communication Districts transition from analog to digital data.
- Wrote the first draft of a Statewide Address Maintenance Business Plan which is being reviewed by members of the Louisiana Chapter of NENA and the Addressing Subcommittee of the Louisiana GIS Council. Kathrine Cargo (OPCD) drafted a Louisiana GIS Council Resolution of Support for adopting the FGDC endorsed the United States Thoroughfare, Landmark, and Postal Address Data Standard. The resolution passed the GIS Council unanimously, and was sent to the State CIO for review.

### Inclusiveness

The effort to date has included the address custodians (Communication Districts), the state geospatial community and the state Chief Information Officer (CIO). LAGIC has made presentations to other Louisiana local government organizations. However, more sustained efforts are required.

## **Changes in Statewide Coordination**

The development of a locationally accurate and continually updated statewide point address data layer would be extremely useful to a number of state entities; including Economic Development, Social Services, Education, Health and Hospitals, Louisiana Broadband Initiative and Homeland Security. This effort was unusual in that it involved coordination between local state and federal agencies. In addition to state interest in this data set, there are a number of non-profits, commercial and educational grant opportunities that LAGIC will pursue.

## **Practices that Led to Success**

- 1) The development of online tools for address data maintenance that did not require the Communication District to have GIS software
- 2) Providing the two NENA certified next Generation 9-1-1 Workshops at no cost to the Communication Districts created "good will" between LAGIC and the 9-1-1 community.
- 3) The pilot addressing project in West Carroll Parish helped us create the tools for address maintenance and develop field data collection techniques.

## **Practices or activities that did not lead to success:**

- 1) I incorrectly assumed that all parishes were members of the Louisiana Chapter of the National Emergency Numbering Association (LaNENA) so our letter requesting their participation went out on an e-mail with LaNENA letterhead. In fact, 44% of the parishes are not members of LaNENA. This may have been one of the reasons that initially we had difficulty getting cooperation from every parish.
- 2) We set a deadline on our online survey remaining open for additional survey responses. We forgot to go back and remove the deadline and late respondents found that they were locked out of the survey.
- 3) Early efforts at coordination with some Communication Districts may have been complicated by suspicions that we might have been trying to impose a statewide solution on autonomous parishes without their concerns being fully addressed.

## **Advancement of the NSDI**

- 1) This project has raised awareness of the importance of the FGDC Approved United States Thoroughfare, Landmark, and Postal Address Data Standard.
- 2) This project has demonstrated that different levels of government, in this case local, state and federal agencies, can coordinate to improve the creation, modification, distribution and storage of an important statewide data set; addresses.

**Next Steps:**

- 1) The completion of the draft business plan is the next step. We will send it out to select LaNENA members, non LaNENA Members and other key stakeholders for preliminary review.
  
- 2) After review it will be distributed to a wider audience of Communication Districts and other stakeholders. Public meetings will be scheduled with the assistance of the eight regional planning authorities. The plan will then be publically presented in each of the eight regions of the state. Those meetings will take place in the Spring of 2013. The comments from the public meetings will be reviewed and incorporated into the final statewide plan.
  
- 3) As far as assistance, we would benefit by reviewing other state addressing plans and incorporating those elements that would work in Louisiana.

**Timeline:**

We should meet our target goals of completing the plan review and drafting the final by the early months of 2013

**Attachments:**

I have attached to this e-mail the following items:

- The Address Survey.
- A map showing the various addressing methods used in the state.

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## **Feedback on the CAP Grant**

### **What are the CAP Grant Strengths and Weaknesses?**

The strength of the CAP Grant program is that it funds coordination activities that might not otherwise be funded. Our recent CAP Grant for creating a Business Plan for Statewide Address Maintenance is an example of a project that all GIS Council members agreed was necessary, but would not have occurred had it not been funded through a CAP Grant. In addition the recommendation that all proposals involve coordination between different agencies or different levels (fed/state/local) of government fosters long term cooperation on many other projects. The funding enables this cooperation.

From my point of view, the only weakness of the program is the limitation on the number of state agencies or entities that can be funded in a given year.

### **Where did it make a difference?**

Without the 2011 CAP Grant we would not have been able to hire Martha Wells (Spatial Focus Inc.) to teach two Address Data Standards Workshops or to contract with the National Emergency Numbering Association (NENA) to conduct two Next Generation 9-1-1 Workshops. The first set of workshops taught by Martha Wells were an essential part of our effort to enlist the Louisiana GIS Council to promote digital address standards. That effort resulted in a GIS Council Resolution of Support for the FGDC endorsed address standard. The Next Generation 9-1-1 Workshops were tailored to the needs of first responder community and effectively made the case for creating and maintaining accurate digital address point data.

### **Was the assistance that you received sufficient or effective?**

The assistance that I received was very effective, in that we were able to do more with the funds than we originally anticipated. We had not originally planned to host two National Emergency Numbering Association Workshops but as we had sufficient funds remaining in our budget, so we requested permission to add the two Next Generation 9-1-1 Workshops.

It has been my experience that most CAP Projects take more than a year to complete. That said, FGDC staff have been supportive in allowing us 3-6 month project extensions as needed. Those extensions have been helpful, allowing us to time to wrap up our projects.

### **What would you recommend that FGDC do differently?**

Don't have CAP Grant applications due in early January. It is almost impossible to contact project partners in mid to late December. This year's February deadline works much better.

### **Are there factors that are missing or are there additional needs that should be considered?**

It might be helpful to assist state GIS coordinators develop a better working relationship with their federal agency partners. Would it be possible to set up meetings between the agencies and state coordinators in conjunction with the NSGIC Mid Year Conference in Annapolis? What about four ½ day meetings at four or five different agency headquarters (Ex; Census, NOAA, USGS, DOT and EPA)? The NSGIC Mid Year generally ends on a Wednesday afternoon leaving Thursday and Friday for potential meetings with agency staff.

### **Are there program management concerns that need to be addressed, such as the time frame?**

The only concern I have on the project time frame, is the time it takes to get funding approval after the grant proposal has been accepted. It would be helpful to have a full year to complete the proposal from the date at which you can officially begin, rather than the date you were notified of the award. There is often a two to three month gap between those two dates.

**If you were to do the project again, what would you do differently?**

I would have met with the officers of the Louisiana Chapter of NENA in the very beginning of the project to explain how the project would benefit their members and what assistance we needed from them. I waited until the project was well underway before sitting down with them to explain our goals.