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Project title: Maximizing Accessibility of the Utah Geospatial Infrastructure

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Project Narrative

Early in the process, it was clear that a simple business plan compiled by AGRC dictating the prioritized datasets and map services of AGRC would not adequately justify our efforts, nor does it successfully make a compelling case to AGRC's business users. As a result we held a series of initial meetings with key customer groups: state agencies, local governments, federal agencies, private business, and education. From those meetings we invited champions or key stakeholders to represent their respective constituency on the UGIC Standards Committee. The Committee was identified as a primary vehicle to ensure broad engagement.

Early in the project, AGRC identified two major state agencies as major GIS data consumers which are critical to defining the Center's implementation plan: Transportation(DOT), and Natural Resources (DNR). While many other state agencies have some level of GIS integrated into parts of their operations, these two agencies have a long history of use and understanding of the state's current Geospatial Infrastructure.

Engagement started with GIS users in the two agencies. However, with their help, agency executives are now engaging and offering business-driven guidance on the necessary data and services GIS assets can provide in support of the agencies' objectives. This increased attention of state agency executives was an unexpected outcome of the CAP funding project and required additional time, slightly delaying the planned timeline of the original plan.

In the Utah Department of Transportation, for example, directors have allocated resources to support the establishment of an agency-wide GIS function centrally coordinate GIS activities throughout one of the largest functions in state government - transportation.

In the Utah Department of Natural Resources their executives have also identified the need for a central department-wide steering committee to coordinate GIS activities and software assets (eg. ESRI) to help control costs and improve data sharing across various divisions.

Just by initiating conversations associated with this CAP funding (with tightening budgets adding extra pressure), AGRC has been able to attract the attention of agency executives that have historically resisted or ignored calls for better coordination and data sharing.

AGRC and USGS have attempted to make this effort as inclusive as possible as our activities can

potentially impact the entire GIS professional community and beyond. We have focused on ensuring we have key champions engaged during the project. That engagement effort is what has consumed a significant amount of resources. As we approach various stakeholders, we assume she or he is inwardly asking "What's in it for me if I volunteer my time in support of this?"

A critical component to our current momentum is interest from outside champions from a diversity of areas. We sought involvement from local governments, education, private business, as well as state and federal agencies.

Key Accomplishments:
- Committee established *and engaged* of primary stakeholders.
- Defined a process for prioritization and best practices within the UGI. (attached summary document)
- Initial meetings with legislators, state county association, to discuss the potential for statutory changes to support our case.
- Identified initial operational adjustments in anticipation of upcoming business plan definition and implementation.
- Increased engagement from executive stakeholders.

Best Practice/Success
One obvious activity that we quickly identified was to allow sufficient time for champions and key stakeholders to discuss, understand, and discuss further their ideas and flush out specific objectives. At AGRC, participants have withheld their own ideas to allow for input from the outside to be articulated more organically. This has had two outcomes: (1) greater engagement and accountability from external stakeholders, (2) it defines the role of AGRC more as a facilitator, less as a dictator.

Next Steps
Because of the unanticipated engagement of state agency senior executives, we have had to delay enlisting consultancy services to assist in the drafting of our business and implementation plan. However, we had an initial meeting with our consultant (Applied Geographics) in July to attempt to define a scope to include additional stakeholders and latest developments. Meetings are tentatively scheduled for middle October.

In addition, AGRC must begin defining specific work tasks against be able to operationally facilitate upcoming implementation of the UGI Business Plan. For example, AGRC's current website/GIS portal is on an outdated platform. In order to be able to implement specific objectives of a business plan, we can take initial steps to prepare for that transition. Another example is where the two major GIS data agencies (transportation and natural resources) have identified a business need to centralize their GIS operations. We anticipate providing a significant portion of the technical expertise to accomplish that transition. We are anticipating additional has invested resources in a new website infrastructure, improved data transformation capabilities, and enhanced development capabilities to rapidly respond to business plan objectives. the investments afford greater flexibility.

AGRC expects to require an additional 6 months to complete the project due to the prolonged nature of getting key stakeholders engaged:
1. Increased time to ensure full engagement of stakeholders. It is a challenge for this divers group to meet once every two months.
2. Increased feedback loops with key stakeholders including legislators and state government executives.
3. Internal operational planning to document feedback. AGRC is in the process of developing an operational plan to accommodate increased collaboration and enhance data availability.

Our proposed revised timeline is as follow:

February-March 2011	AGRC and UGIC to jointly convene working group which will identify key action items for the business plan	Completed April 2011 (delayed due to award)
April 2011	Seek broader participation from the GIS Community at annual UGIC conference	Completed April 2011
April-May 2011	Collect feedback, initiate drafting of specific work items for the business plan (including schedule, participants, funding, etc.)	Completed June 2011
September-October 2011	• Stakeholder meetings to discuss specific objectives and define potential action items. • Develop AGRC operational plan to accommodate added feedback and response mechanisms between AGRC and key customer groups.	
October-December 2011	• Draft Business Plan and accoampnying documents (operational plan, governance proposal, etc.) • Review general findings with UGIC Standards Committee, State CIO's Office	
June-August 2011 Revised: January 2012	Publish and present draft business plan to regional GIS user groups for feedback and endorsement. Begin ~~identifying~~ implementing technological infrastructure required within AGRC to to intiate a transition in support the anticipated business plan.	We have identified three clear pieces of technologies through other funding opportunities we believe will help support upcoming changes. Ongoing technologies will be identified and funded as a result of the business plan itself.
September-October 2011 Revised: March-May 2012	Present business plan to policy leaders (State CIO, legislators, local government associations, etc.) for support, feedback and endorsement.	
October-December 2011 Revised: June 2012	Begin implementation of business plan by identifying any needed enabling policy actions (legislation, administrative rules, etc.) ~~and~~ internal operational processes at AGRC, and additional technologies.	

Attachments:
UGIC Standards Process (http://goo.gl/coQcY)