



2006 3rd Quarter Interim Project Report

NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program

Fifty States Initiative Project

Agreement Number: 06HQAG0106

Organization: Texas Department of Information Resources
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Project Description

Texas state government is extremely decentralized and lacks adequate staffing and funding to support NSDI coordination activities on a statewide basis. The state GIS coordination council – the Texas Geographic Information Council (TGIC) is primarily composed of state agencies and universities with inadequate representation from the local, regional and federal government sectors and the private sector. A new approach is needed to support statewide NSDI implementation in Texas that will increase participation and lead to the formation of more partnerships and coordinated efforts at all levels of government.

The Texas Department of Information resources was awarded contract #06HQAG0106 for the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) - Fifty-States Initiative Program in April 2006. The original project scope of work focused on developing a NSDI strategic plan and business plan in conjunction with the 2006 Legislative Report by the Texas Geographic Information Council (TGIC).

Clear consensus on business plan goals and objectives for the report were not achieved, however, during the planning process over the summer of 2006. For this reason, the project has been revised with a new scope of work that is

expected to have a successful outcome and deliverables within the FY-2007 calendar year. The Texas NSDI Strategic Assessment Report will describe the current strengths and weakness in NSDI implementation in Texas along with identifying specific opportunities for improvement. The new project approach is provided as Attachment 1, and replaces the original project approach submitted for the grant award.

Project Activities

1. The Texas 50-States Project was initiated the week of May 22, 2006. Eli Pearson, University of Texas at Austin was brought in as a summer-hire through the grant to support project research efforts.
2. An inventory of State agency and university GIS software, data, web services and priorities, has been successfully completed. The inventory will go through a final process of analysis and report formatting this month.
3. A strategic planning effort was begun this summer that was also intended to support the GIS Biennial Legislative Report due on September 1, 2006. This strategic planning effort was channeled through the Texas Geographic Information Council Steering Committee. The group successfully identified a number of issues, but was less successful at reaching consensus on strategic planning goals and processes to address these issues. The GIS Biennial Legislative Report was completed on September 1, 2006. However, the support work being conducted through the 50-States Initiative grant did not meet the objectives delineated in the original project approach.
4. Moving forward, a revised project approach has been formulated that will develop a strategic assessment of NSDI implementation in Texas and opportunities for improvement.

Next Steps

1. Hire new temp support personnel
2. Finalize and publish state data and web services inventory
3. Conduct NSDI assessment meetings / workshops
4. Conduct state-to-state peer research
5. Report development
6. Publish draft report
7. Brief stakeholders on project progress
8. Publish final report / project wrap-up
9. Use the Strategic Assessment process / report to expedite discussions and consensus toward the development of geospatial strategic and business plans in FY2008 (*begins September 1, 2007*)
10. Develop FY2008 geospatial strategic and business plan(s)

Attachment 1

Texas NSDI Strategic Assessment – Revised Project Approach

The NSDI Strategic Assessment (*the Assessment*) process will involve a series of meetings and workshops with key NSDI stakeholders at the state, federal, local and regional level to help identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improving NSDI implementation in Texas. The project will also include an inventory of state government data and web services and key contacts within state, federal, and local government.

The Assessment will include a state-to-state peer review that would compare the progress of Texas on NSDI initiatives to comparable state peers and the objectives set by the FGDC. The key focus areas of the state-to-state peer comparison would be:

- Governance and Administrative Structure Comparison
- Funding Investment Comparison
- GIT Architecture Best Practices Comparison
- NSDI Performance Metrics Comparison

DIR will work closely with state, federal, and regional / local stakeholders to ensure a successful planning outcome. The end result of the Assessment is intended to be a catalyst for positive change and implementation of NSDI goals in Texas by opening up discussion and dialog with major stakeholders. The Assessment will provide:

Project Goals

1. Provide potential options to restructure coordination activities to be more effective and broaden statewide participation
2. Identify potential funding mechanisms for NSDI implementation
3. Describe potential models and organizational approaches to implement a geospatial information technology (GIT) architecture
4. Identify potential performance metrics to measure ongoing success toward NSDI implementation

Deliverables

1. Texas NSDI Strategic Assessment Report
2. Geospatial Inventory for Texas State Government