

Report Format for Fifty States Initiative Projects

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Organization: District of Columbia Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO)

Principal Investigator: Barney Krucoff, Geographic Information System Manager
 District of Columbia, OCTO
Barney.Krucoff@dc.gov
<http://dcgis.dc.gov>

Collaborating Organizations: The participated in one or more meetings associated with creation of the DC GIS Strategic Plan.

Participants	NAME	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Applied Grographics, Inc.	Grady, Rich	grady@appgeo.com
BBG-BBGM	Judge, Hilary	Hilary.Judge@bbg-bbgm.com
Benjamin Harrison Society (4H)	Anderson, Acquanetta	atanderson@benjamin-harrison-society.org
Benjamin Harrison Society (4H)	Anderson, Ronald	randerson@benjamin-harrison-society.org
Casey Trees Foundation	Howard, Holli	hhoward@caseytrees.org
D.C. Child and Family Services Administration	Hardrick, Curtis	curtis.hardrick@dc.gov
D.C. Child and Family Services Administration	Monteiro, Virginia	virginia.monteiro@dc.gov
D.C. Child and Family Services Administration	Wilson, Linda	linda.wilson@dc.gov
D.C. Department of Consumer Regulatory Affairs	Gilmore, Matthew	matthew.gilmore@dc.gov
D.C. Department of Consumer Regulatory Affairs	Razavi, Amir	amirh.razavi@dc.gov
D.C. Department of Human Services	Pan, Jate	jate.pan@dc.gov
D.C. Department of Human Services	Yung-Fatah, Ellen	ellen.fatah@dc.gov
D.C. Department of Human Services	Andoh, Jacob	jacob.andoh@dc.gov
D.C. Department of Mental Health	Byrne, Daniel	daniel.byrne@dc.gov
D.C. Department of Public Works	Koehler, David	David.Koehler@dc.gov
D.C. District Department of Environment	Evans, Julia	julia.evans@dc.gov
D.C. District Department of Transportation	Amerault, Jim	jim.amerault@dc.gov
D.C. District Department of Transportation	Colon, Jose	jose.colon@dc.gov

Participants	NAME	E-MAIL ADDRESS
D.C. District Department of Transportation	Kammerman, Joseph	joseph.kammerman@dc.gov
D.C. District Department of Transportation	Miller, David	david.miller2@dc.gov
D.C. District Department of Transportation	Yeterawork, Markos	Markos.Yeterawork@dc.gov
D.C. Executive Office of the Mayor	Butcher, Angela	Angela.Butcher@dc.gov
D.C. Executive Office of the Mayor	Nixon, Camille	camille.nixon@dc.gov
D.C. Executive Office of the Mayor	Williams, Millicent	Millicent.Williams@dc.gov
D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services	Agrawal, Jyoti	Jyoti.Agrawal@dc.gov
D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services	Molivadas, Caroline	Caroline.Molivadas@dc.gov
D.C. Office of Planning	Anna, Alemayehu	alemayehu.anna@dc.gov
D.C. Office of Planning	Faust, Chris	chris.faust@dc.gov
D.C. Office of Planning	Graham, James	james.graham@dc.gov
D.C. Office of Planning	Richman, Charlie	charlie.richman@dc.gov
D.C. Office of Planning	Waardenburg, Dennis	dennis.waardenburg@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Financial Officer	Cappello, Stephen	stephen.cappello@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Financial Officer	Codd, John	john.codd@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Financial Officer	Cruz, Nathan	nate.cruz@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Financial Officer	Jordan, Ed	edward.jordan@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Berry, Rasheed	Rasheed.Berry@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Fei, Chuanyun	chuanyun.fe@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Field, Mario	mario.field@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Harley, Lisa	lisa.harley@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Horne, Robert	robert.horne@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Kachaev, Dmitry	dmitry.kachaev@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Krucoff, Barney	barney.krucoff@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Kundra, Vivek	vivek.kundra@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Legerwood, Roger	roger.legerwood@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Liang, Tianpu	tianpu.liang@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Lo, Zhen	zhen.lo@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Mack, Jennifer	jennifer.mack@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Salvatierra, Alexander	alexander.salvatierra@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Srivastav, Vivek	vivek.srivastav@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Wiseman, Andrew	andrew.wiseman@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Zbarsky, Alex	Alex.Zbarsky@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer	Koonce, Timothy	timothy.koonce@dc.gov
D.C. Office of the City Administrator	Heinrich, Phil	phil.heinrich@dc.gov
D.C. Office of Zoning	Nyambi, Nyambi	nyambi.nyambi@dc.gov
D.C. Officer of Property Management	O'Connor, Kevin	kevin.oconnor@dc.gov
D.C. Public Schools	Gohl, Daniel	daniel.gohl@k12.dc.us
D.C. Public Schools	Ghaffari, Josh	josh.ghaffari@dc.gov
D.C. Water and Sewer Authority	Sharp, Sigi	Sigi.Sharp@dcwasa.com
Focus	Deveaux, Naomi	ndeveaux@focusdc.org
George Mason University	Andronikov, Serge	sandroni@gmu.edu
Georgetown University	Cash, Timothy	cast@georgetown.edu

Participants	NAME	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Holland & Knight LLP	Williams, Lindsley	lwilliams@hkclaw.com
New Light Technologies Inc.	Araya, Ghermey	ghermey.araya@newlighttechnologies.com
New Light Technologies Inc.	Abdella, Tim	tim.abdella@newlighttechnologies.com
Peck Technology Solutions Inc.	Tariq, Mohammad	mtariq@peaktsinc.com
Spatial Systems Inc.	Newman, Larry	lnewman@spatialsys.com
U.S. Commission of Fine Arts	Simon, Tony	tsimon@cfa.gov
U.S. DoD JTFHQ-NCR, NORTHCOM	Stidd, Mark	mark.stidd@fmmc.army.mil
U.S. National Capital Planning Commission	Walton, Ken	ken.walton@ncpc.gov
U.S. National Park Service	Stidham, Tammy	Tammy_stidham@nps.gov
U.S. Geological Survey	Barlow, Roger	rbarlow@usgs.gov
University of the District of Columbia	Hamon-Martin, Dr.Sheila	smartin@udc.edu
Urban Institute	Tatian, Peter A.	ptatian@ui.urban.org
Washington DC Economic Development Partnership	Shuskey, Chad	cshuskey@wdcep.com
Washington DC Economic Development Partnership	Skirbunt, Ted	tskirbunt@wdcep.com
Washington Metropolitan Transit Organization	Wells, Ed	ewells@wmata.com

Executive Summary

The District of Columbia adopted a new “Geographic Information System Strategic Plan,” as a result of the of NSDI Cooperative Agreement. The document is attached. The plan is the result of an open and participatory process. It embodies input from the District of Columbia Geographic Information System (DC GIS) stakeholder community of interest, which includes a diverse population of participants from both inside and outside of DC Government. The main emphasis of this plan is on the long-term direction of the DC GIS Program, for both activities and governance. A specific outcome of the planning process is a refined Mission Statement for the Program, as follows:

The Mission of DC Geographic Information System (DC GIS) is to improve the quality and lower the cost of services provided by the DC Government, through the District’s collective investment and effective application of geospatial data and systems. Furthermore, DC GIS will reach beyond the DC Government by continuing to make DC GIS data freely and publicly available to the fullest extent possible in consideration of privacy and security.

Project Narrative

The planning process resulted in specific long-term (five year) goals to achieve continued success and improvements, listed below:

- 1) Ensure that state and local needs are met by focusing resources on geospatial data, systems, and program activities that are in alignment with District priorities
- 2) Develop and operate enterprise mapping data, geospatial applications, and Web services that enhance the utility, reduce the cost, and expand the interoperability of citywide and agency IT systems
- 3) Provide outstanding customer service and training that enable DC GIS users and stakeholders to leverage the full power of GIS technology

- 4) Sustain and improve GIS coordination and partnerships in the District of Columbia, the region, and the nation
- 5) Be innovative and adapt to the changing market for geospatial technology
- 6) Apply GIS in ways that increase revenue and reduce costs for the District

Short-term (two-year) success factors for each goal listed above are described in the body of the plan, to help guide the action-oriented implementation program. While parallel activities are anticipated across all six programmatic goals, certain aspects will be emphasized in more detailed business plans. For example, programmatic goals #2 and #3 (see above) were selected as the dual-subject for a focused Business Plan, which will be a separate document emanating from this Strategic Plan. Its details will be congruent with this plan's high-level content and overall intentions.

Immediate actions recommended in the Strategic Plan are as follows:

OCTO will:

- Seek endorsement of Mayor's Order 2002-27 from the current Mayor, Adrian M. Fenty, after refinements as necessary
- formally add permanent members to the Geographic Information System Steering Committee (GISSC); in addition to the current permanent members (Office of the Chief Technology Officer, District Department of Transportation, Office of Planning, and the Office of the City Administrator) add the following in a formal and recognized manner:
 - Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
 - Department of Health
 - Department of Public Works
 - District Department of the Environment
 - Fire and Emergency Medical Services
 - Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency
 - Metropolitan Police Department
 - Office of Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
 - Office of Tax and Revenue
 - Office of Unified Communications
 - Office of Zoning
 - Water and Sewer Authority
 - United States Geological Survey
- Schedule an official "GISSC Annual Budget Meeting" for September of each year to review the past year's spending, and the DC GIS Business Plan for spending in the coming year(s).

The GISSC Permanent Members will:

- Conduct a vote to endorse and adopt this Strategic Plan as a guide to the continuing operations of DC GIS and GISSC governance reform, including by reference the official adoption of the DC Government Federated Geospatial Data Model and associated best practices
- Develop Bylaws for the governance of GISSC, such as the following formalities:
 - Meeting rules
 - Voting rules
 - Rules for the formation and governance of subcommittees

The Full GISSC will:

- Meet at least quarterly
- Be open to all; including federal agencies, universities, non-profit organizations, private sector users, and geospatial vendors
- Serve as a forum for the exchange of information and ideas
- Provide advice to the GISSC Permanent Members and to OCTO
- Adopt GIS technical standards

Summary of project activities

- 8/20/07, USGS finalized the grant award to DC OCTO
- 9/14/07 DC awarded a contract to Applied Geographics Inc. of Boston Massachusetts. Applied Geographics is to facilitate the planning process using established FGDC / NSGIC methodology.
- 10/07 a series of small planning meetings and teleconferences were held between OCTO, USGS, DC Office of Planning, and Applied Geographics Inc.
- 12/03/07 DC hosted a planning workshop. The workshop attracted approximately 70 people. Minutes of the workshop are attached.
- 1/23/08 A follow-up meeting was held between Applied Geographics and key stakeholders
- 5/28/08 *First Draft DC GIS Strategic Plan (work-in-progress) by AppGeo*
- 6/11/08 *Second Draft v.5 Ibid. by AppGeo*
- 6/26/08 *Second Draft v.6 Ibid. by AppGeo*
- 7/16/08 *Final Draft v.1 For final review by OCTO by Appgeo*
- 9/22/08 *Final Draft v.2 Including OCTO final revisions by OCTO*
- 10/20/08 *Final Draft v.3 Revisions from USGS by OCTO*
- 1/24/09 *Final Version Including GISSC endorsed changes by OCTO*

Key accomplishments to date

The DC GIS program was already a tangible success as measured by production of data and applications; however the planning process revealed the need/desire for improved and governance. The key accomplishment of the completed plan is a consensus among stakeholders to expand and formalize program governance including the specific action items reported above.

How inclusive is your effort? What have you done to bring new stakeholder groups or organizations into statewide coordination?

Participation of federal agencies and non-profits was explicitly sought during the planning process. Numerous agencies and non-profits continue to participate. The Plan reaffirms the structure of the GISSC which defines the roles of "permanent" and other members. The steering committee is now open to all with inherently government functions reserved to the permanent members.

Explain how statewide coordination has (or will) change as a result of this project.

DC GIS will have a more formal and collaborative governance structure which is intended to result in stakeholders having a larger voice in technical and budgetary priorities.

What practices or activities led to success?

Use of outside consult was very helpful.

What practices or activities have not?

We had difficulty sustaining the effort overtime. We should have worked faster, but that would have been more demanding on stakeholders time.

Next Steps

Describe the next steps in your project:

1. Expanding the group “Permanent Members” of the GISSC to be more representational.
2. Developing and adopting bylaws for the GISSC .
3. Employ the expanded and more formal GISSC to complete the DC GIS business plan by September 2009.

How will this project continue into the future and remain viable? DC already had a vibrant GIS program. The new Strategic Plan is largely about institutionalizing that success. The expanded GISSC permanent membership and bylaws are intended to give stakeholder’s a sustained voice in the program.

Where do you need assistance? What type of assistance do you need? The new strategic plan identifies the United States Geological Survey as a future permanent member of the GISSC. DC hopes that USGS and thus FGDC will remain active participants.

Attachments

[District of Columbia Geographic Information System Strategic Plan](#)

Feedback on Cooperative Agreements Program

What are the CAP Program strengths and weaknesses? The combination federal funding (FGDC) and involvement (USGS) give credibility to the planning process.

Was the assistance you received sufficient or effective? Yes, the Federal Geographic Data Committee and the District’s United States Geological Survey liaison were an important and constructive part of the planning process.

What would you recommend that the FGDC do differently? Consider developing stronger technical and data sharing criteria for States. The current criteria are focused on process and program management. Those are important, but need to be tied to success in developing and delivering geospatial datasets/capabilities.

Are there program management concerns that need to be addressed, such as the time frame? DC was behind schedule, but we should have been faster. It was not the schedules fault.

If you were to do this again, what would you do differently? DC GIS staff should have moved the project faster and held more regular meetings with stakeholders.