

Fifty States Initiative Projects: Strategic and Business Plan Development

Final Project Report

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Project Title: Washington GIS Strategic Planning in Support of the 50 States Initiatives:
Building a Business Plan for Tracking Progress and Results

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Executive Summary

One of the key successes of this project includes the creation of a clear strategic vision, mission and goals that will help guide GIS activities over the next 5 years. It also includes an updated business plan that provides clear guidance on furthering GIS in Washington State.

VISION: Utilize geospatial technology to facilitate decision-making to benefit Washington State citizens.

MISSION: Work in partnership with public and private sector statewide to provide accurate, consistent, accessible, and comprehensive GIS resources for decision makers and the public.

PROGRAMATIC GOALS:

Goal 1: Establish Access Mechanism for Washington Geospatial Data

Goal 2: Staff GIS Program Office and Recruit a State Geospatial Information Officer

Goal 3: Strengthen Coordination across Jurisdictions and Agencies

Goal 4: Develop Statewide Standards and Guidelines for Data and Services

Goal 5: Increase Awareness and Support for GIS through Education and Outreach

The resulting Business Plan addresses Goals 1 and 2. Together, these goals best describe an enterprise GIS Program that will help agencies realize Washington's Governor's objectives for creating shared services in state agencies and GIS consolidation across the agencies. The GIS Business Plan lays the groundwork for the development of a federated organizational model to more effectively deploy GIS resources in the State of Washington.

Project Narrative

The GIS Business Plan is an extension of the *Strategic Plan: Mapping Washington's Future, 2010-2014* completed under the *50 States Initiative's* grant from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) as identified above.

The business plan titled "*Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Business Plan: Washington Enterprise GIS Program and Shared Access to Geospatial Services*" specifically addresses two of the goals in the strategic plan, and details the implementation of an enterprise approach to delivering GIS services.

Enterprise GIS Approach

The GIS enterprise approach advances customer services by providing external entities access to desired information, spatial data resources, standards, and web-based services in an effort to support transparency in state government. The key enterprise program elements include:

Formalize GIS Data Stewardship: Designate **data steward(s)** for each of the enterprise level GIS data sets and any data services consuming these data.

Provide Shared GIS Infrastructure: Establish **a single point of access** for enterprise level data and shared services to reduce confusion and storage costs of hosting multiple data and provide access to services like address matching, visualization tools, and applications that public, private, and governmental entities can use and benefit from. Shared data will lead to better decisions as agencies work from official versions of data rather than multiple, unsynchronized or inconsistent versions of data.

Expand Washington State GIS Program Office: Expand **Washington State GIS Program Office** and establish the state **Geospatial Information Officer (GIO)** to be responsible for running the shared infrastructure, coordinating GIS data and software purchases, managing business agreements between stakeholders, securing sustainable funding for the upkeep of the shared infrastructure, coordinating data acquisition, and serving as the GIS point-of-contact for external stakeholders. The GIO will interface and coordinate across all governmental entities and businesses at the executive level.

Implementation Plan

The Business Plan embraces changes the GIS community has envisioned for years and recommended in the Washington's 2006 Enterprise Architecture effort. The implementation of this Plan is separated into four phases:

Phase I – Budget Development and Return on Investment Planning

Enterprise GIS Program: Create the budget decision packages needed to fund the phased development of the vision outlined in this Plan (staffing and infrastructure).

Return on Investment Funding/Grant: Submit grant proposal to fund the development of an ROI analysis for common infrastructure geospatial data and value of shared services.

Return on Investment (ROI): Plan for conducting a formal ROI analysis for Enterprise GIS implementation and need for geospatial data. (Identify potential ROI funding opportunities; identify entity participation and commitments for involvement).

Phase II – Infrastructure and Technical Staff Implementation

Infrastructure: Implement the infrastructure needed to support the access, discovery portal, storage and potential maintenance of common geospatial data, once funding is identified and procured. Leverage and expand the existing orthoimagery portal infrastructure and add the hardware and software resources needed to support the enterprise environment for framework data and shared services.

Technical Staffing: Develop job descriptions and recruiting plan for technical support staff. Begin hiring process for required and approved staffing.

Shared Geospatial Services and Data: Positions infrastructure and staff to provide shared geospatial services to a wide range of governmental entities and stakeholder clients.

Phase III – Enterprise GIS Office Expansion/Geographic Information Officer (GIO)

Staff GIS Program Office: Develop job description for GIO position; develop recruiting plan and hiring process for GIO; develop job descriptions and recruiting plan for technical support staff. Begin hiring process for required and approved staff.

Phase IV – Agency GIS Program Data Implementation

Framework Data Sets: Provide the necessary support and funding needed to complete the active framework data efforts.

Shared Geospatial Services: Provide the necessary support and staffing needed to supply the shared geospatial services to the access and discovery Portal.

These documents and its findings are the key result of stakeholder outreach effort that were conducted in Washington between October and November 2009. They included the GIS user community in federal and state agencies, regional organizations, counties, cities, tribes, educational institutions, utilities, and the private sector. The stakeholders were engaged in multiple ways during the strategic planning process. Executive committee focus groups were convened, as well as a discussion group with the Information Services Board (ISB) Committee

on Geographic Information Technology (GIT) to develop potential themes and priorities for the strategic plan. These themes and priorities were then discussed by the larger GIS user community, through an online survey and at regional listening sessions. The input from these forums shaped both the GIS strategic and business plan.

The Strategic Plan has been presented to and formally adopted by the ISB which is the governing body for policy development, strategic IT planning, and oversight of executive branch agencies. It's comprised of members from the executive, judicial, and legislative branches, K-12 education, higher education, an elected official, and the private sector.

In just the short time these plans have been approved and adopted they are already being leveraged in: state agency internal GIS planning discussions and activities; on the Governor's efforts to implement information technology (IT) shared services; and in discussions on ways to streamline the delivery of government IT services.

Next Steps

Adoption, Outreach, Marketing and Implementation is the next set of priorities. They include:

- Adoption of the business plan with ISB-GIT and the ISB Committees;
- Discussion with smaller state agencies (e.g. the Puget Sound Partnership and the Office of Public Instruction) on how these plans can help guide their understand and efforts to deliver and expand their GIS services while leveraging existing and new geospatial shared services; and
- Guide the Governor's initiative to drive efficiencies in the delivery of geospatial services within the natural resource agencies.

In order to demonstrate cost benefits and savings we need to obtain grant assistance for a formal Return on Investment (ROI). In the absence of a formal ROI analysis it will be difficult to quantify actual savings.

Feedback on Cooperative Agreements Program

Funding to develop plans like these are generally difficult to obtain within state GIS coordinating bodies but are fundamentally important in being able to articulate the value of this technology to executive management and decision makers. In Washington, the USGS has shown great support and flexibility in allowing an extension of this grant that enabled us to complete a more far-reaching and comprehensive plans.

Final Deliverables:

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Strategic Plan: Mapping Washington's Future, 2010-2014
Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Business Plan: Washington Enterprise GIS Program and Shared Access to Geospatial Services