

# Final Project Report for Alabama's NSDI CAP Category 3 Fifty States Initiative

**Date:**

September 1, 2011

**Agreement Number:**

G10AC00176

**Project Title:**

Alabama 2010 CAP Category 3

**Report Type:**

Final Report

**Organization:**

Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)

P. O. Box 5690

401 Adams Avenue

Montgomery, AL 36103

<http://adeca.alabama.gov>

**Principal Investigator:**

Phillip Henderson

334.353.1038

[Phillip.Henderson@adeca.alabama.gov](mailto:Phillip.Henderson@adeca.alabama.gov)

**Collaborating Organizations:**

Members of the Alabama GIS Executive Council

**Alabama Department of Finance (ADOF)**, Dr. Marquita Davis, 600 Dexter Ave., Suite N-105, Montgomery, AL 36130 <http://finance.alabama.gov/>

**Alabama Department of Revenue (ADOR)**, Julie Magee, 50 North Ripley St., Montgomery, AL 36132 <http://revenue.alabama.gov/>

**Alabama Department of Transportation (ADOT)**, John Cooper, 1409 Coliseum Blvd, Montgomery, AL 36110 <http://www.dot.state.al.us>

**Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA)**, Art Faulkner, P.O. Drawer 2160, 5898 County Rd. 41, Clanton, AL 35046 <http://ema.alabama.gov/>

**Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM)**, Lance LeFleur, 1400 Coliseum Blvd., Montgomery, AL 36130 <http://adem.alabama.gov/>

**Alabama Department of Homeland Security (ADHS)**, Spencer Collier, P.O. Box 304115, Montgomery, AL 36130 <http://dhs.alabama.gov/>

**Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)**, Jim Byard Jr., 401 Adams Ave, P.O. Box 5690, Montgomery, AL 36103 <http://adeca.alabama.gov/>

**Alabama Department of Conservation (ADCNR)**, N. Gunter Guy, Jr., 64 N. Union St., Montgomery, AL 36130 <http://dcnr.alabama.gov/>

**Alabama Department of Public Safety (ADPS)**, Colonel Hugh McCall, P.O. Box 1511, Montgomery, AL 36102  
<http://dps.alabama.gov/>

**Alabama Department of Industrial Relations (ADIR)** Thomas Surtees, 649 Monroe St., Montgomery, AL 36131  
<http://dir.alabama.gov/>

**Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries (AAGI)**, John McMillian, 1445 Federal Dr., Montgomery, AL 36107 <http://agi.alabama.gov/>

**Alabama Association of County Commissioners (ACCA)**, David Palmer, 100 North Jackson St., Montgomery, AL 36104 <http://www.acca-online.org/>

**Alabama League of Municipalities (ALM)**, Ryan Pecharka, P.O. Box 1270, Montgomery, AL 36102  
<http://www.alalm.org/>

**Geological Survey of Alabama (GSA)**, Dr. Nick Tew, P.O. Box 869999, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401  
<http://gsa.alabama.gov/>

**Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center (ACJIC)**, Maury Mitchell, 201 South Union St., Suite 300, Montgomery, AL 36130 <http://acjic.state.al.us/>

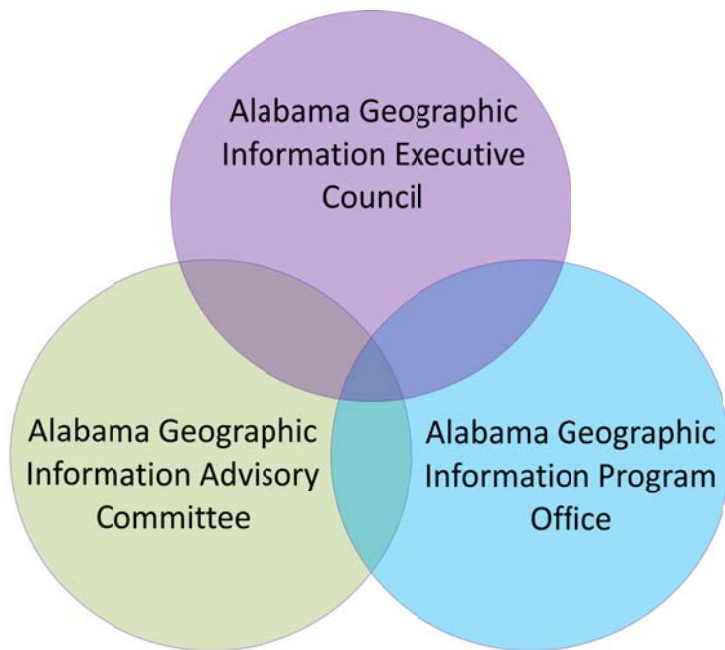
The organizations listed above are the state agency members of the Governor's Executive GIS Council established by Executive Order 16. The majority of these members are at the cabinet level in the Governor's office and all are Executive Directors for their respective organizations. In addition, we are in the process of establishing the participants of the State of Alabama Advisory Committee. This committee is very diverse and is made up of important stakeholders from across the state. It also includes ex-officio members such as Alabama Power Company, Alabama Rural Electric Association of Cooperatives, Alabama Rural Water Association, United States Geological Survey, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Army Corp of Engineers, and Tennessee Valley Authority.

### **Executive Summary**

Governor Bob Riley through Executive Order 38 in November of 2007, established a statewide GIS collaboration and coordination effort by creating a GIS Executive Council and its GIS Advisory Committee. It was not until 2009 that these governing bodies began actively pursuing an agenda to coordinate GIS efforts around the state to ensure statewide representation of stakeholder interests. Governor Robert Bentley through Executive Order 16 in May of 2011, rescinded Governor Riley's Executive Order 38. The new Executive Order has made significant improvements to GIS efforts across the state. The Strategic Plan that was completed in February 2011, from this CAP 3 grant, played a significant role in the creation of Executive Order 16. This includes the recommendation that county and local municipal governments be added as permanent representatives on the GIS Executive Council. In addition, all of the key agencies that were in place remain in place. Another important recommendation from the Strategic Plan that was implemented was the creation of the Alabama Geographic Information Program Office. One of the key purposes of this Office is to coordinate GIS efforts statewide based upon input from the GIS Executive Council. In addition, the director of the State Program Office will serve as the chairman of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee is in the process of re-establishing its membership. It is important to note that the Strategic Plan created from the grant has greatly influenced decisions by Governor Bentley and his cabinet. As a result, key components of the Strategic Plan are being implemented.

## Project Narrative

This project was extremely successful for the State of Alabama. The Strategic Plan integrates the key components of the Fifty States Initiative, and after the election of Governor (Robert Bentley), it was used as a guide for the implementation of his Executive Order 16. This included the creation of the Alabama Geographic Information Program Office to serve as a functional, operating arm of the Alabama Geographic Executive Council in May 2011. In addition, as recommended by the CAP 3 process, permanent membership for county and local governments on the Executive Council was established. This process has been very timely and has assisted the State in moving forward with GIS as a state resource. Figure 1 demonstrates the leadership and committee structure for GIS in the state as recommended by the Strategic Plan from this grant.

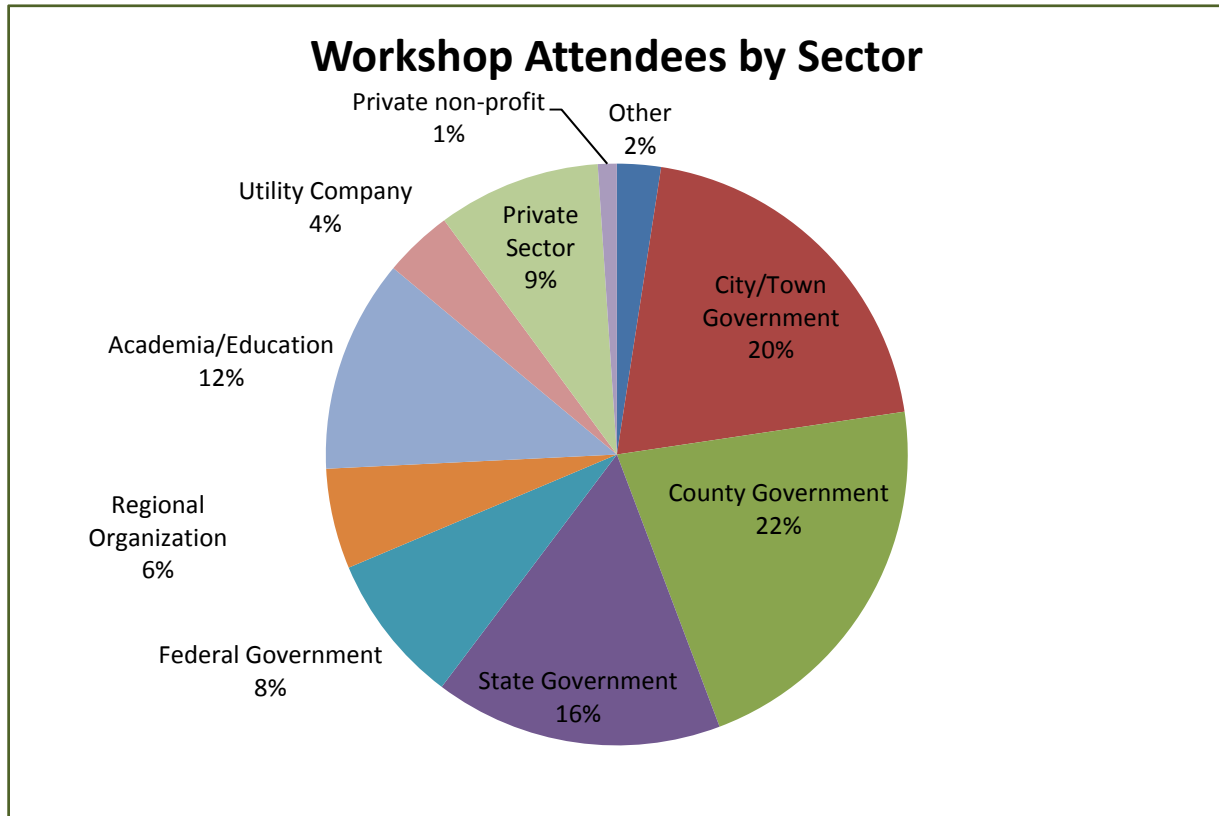


**Figure - 1. Relationship between the Executive Council, Program Office, and Advisory Committee.**

## Summary of Project Activities

The kick-off meeting for project planning was held in late September 2010, with the monthly meeting of the GIS Advisory Committee. It was well attended and extremely successful. A key recommendation from this meeting was to build upon and leverage the existing Alabama Geospatial Strategic Plan. Applied Geographics, Inc., the professional facilitator, also conducted a series of interviews with a variety of stakeholders. This included GIS managers and directors at Blount County EMA, Alabama Department of Revenue, Alabama Department of Environmental Management, Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center, Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Alabama Department of Transportation, Geospatial Technologies with the US Space and Rocket Center, Alabama Emergency Management Agency, Franklin County Engineer, City of Prattville, Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Council, and the Alabama Department of Finance (a complete list is found in the Strategic Plan). In addition, Applied Geographics, Inc. conducted an online survey. One of the most exciting parts

of this effort has been the exchange of information from the five regional stakeholder meetings. The total attendance was 181 people. The largest numbers came from county and local governments which were highly desired because these entities have not been engaged to this point at such a level, as shown on figure 2. The workshops and surveys were open to anyone and we encouraged participation from every available resource. In addition, all of the GIS Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public.



**Figure - 2. Workshop Attendees.**

Key activities for project planning of the strategic plan are listed below:

- Preliminary teleconferences to set up the project and establish a work-plan with ADECA, the contract manager
- Background research on relevant materials provided by state or discovered by contractor
- Project planning meeting in conjunction with an AGI Advisory Committee meeting
- Online survey
- Stakeholder outreach workshops
- Interviews with a variety of stakeholders, including the following (Executive Council and Advisory Committee)
- Draft Plan Delivery
- Participation in Alabama GIS Advisory Committee Meetings
- Final Plan Delivery

It is important to note that every effort was made to include all GIS stakeholders statewide. This included conducting the Huntsville workshop in concert with the Rocket City Geospatial Conference & Alabama GIS Symposium. As a result of this project, it was determined that the state will conduct regional meetings in the future in order to assure that all stakeholders' voices are heard. Key observations to the success of this project include the hiring of a professional facilitator who brings an independent voice that is not biased upon existing politics or opinions. It is important to note that Applied Geographics, Inc. did an exceptional job with this project. The five regional workshops contributed significantly to the success of the Strategic Plan. The results of the workshops influenced the outcome of the project considerably. All of the members of the GIS Advisory Committee that attended these workshops indicated that these types of workshops should continue year after year.

### **Next Steps**

It is important that the newly created Alabama Geographic Information Program Office get leverage from pooled funds and coordinated procurement. In addition, it is vital to look for ways to reduce duplication of efforts and discover cost-sharing opportunities. Essentially, the Program Office will look for ways of concentrating efforts toward common goals. It is also important to work toward legislation to codify the Alabama Geographic Information Executive Council, Advisory Committee, and Program Office in order to remain viable in the future. This grant has been extremely beneficial to the state. Additional assistance with the development of specific business plans would be very helpful.

### **Attachments**

- Alabama Geospatial Strategic & Business Planning Project: Full Report
- Alabama Geospatial Strategic & Business Planning Project: Program Office Recommendation
- Alabama Stakeholder Workshop Invitation
- Alabama Workshops Summary Slides
- Alabama SWOT Top Three of Each Workshop
- Alabama Survey Response Slides
- Alabama Strategic Plan Kick Off Meeting

### **Feedback on Cooperative Agreements Program**

One of the key successes to this program was created by the use of an independent professional facilitator. This created an environment that was conducive to breaking down barriers and it created a unified voice. This made an immense difference in the outcome of this process. As a result, I do recommend that these types of programs continue.