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Project title: A Business Plan for IGI Framework Layers for Emergency Management Applications

Final Report

Organization: Iowa Geographic Information Council, 291 Durham, Ames, IA 50011
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Executive Summary

A business plan was developed to create a cooperative program to build and maintain statewide parcels and orthoimagery. Statewide address points are being studied under a separate NG911 planning activity by Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management. The plan tries to maximize investments made by both local and state government agencies, and develop incentives for further cooperation. The plan has the goal of 100% coverage by 2020.

Project Narrative

The Iowa Geospatial Infrastructure (IGI) is Iowa's contribution to the NSDI. In the business plan activities, statewide parcels, orthoimagery and address points were studied, especially with regard to emergency management applications. Potential users were surveyed in 2013 for requirements. Working groups met over the course of the project to discuss barriers to and opportunities for collaboration. Participation of local governments in all three data compilation and maintenance efforts is critical. County GIS data producers generally want to help out, but are limited in participating due to lack of time and resources, institutional restrictions (data fees and use agreements), or no perceived benefit back to the county. Emergency managers at the state and federal level generally don't have time to negotiate data access during emergencies, and in the past have had little resources to acquire high-quality local data or commercial alternatives. Natural disasters in Iowa have been more numerous during the past several years.

This plan outlines opportunities for the state to provide incentives to county data stewards to participate in a statewide program. For example, instead of running its own 1' statewide ortho acquisition, the state could provide financial support for new county ortho programs while encouraging data sharing of existing high-quality orthoimagery through small incentive payments. With high county participation, this option could cost about half as much as the state led 1' program.

Timing for implementing a cooperative program is good with resources available to state agencies for NG911 and property tax reform. GIS programs have started in the all the remaining counties without GIS. Recognition that GIS data is subject to open record laws, and changes in the Iowa Code making it easier for some state agencies to access county GIS data are adding to the pressure to come up with plans that benefit all users.

The plan will be presented to stakeholders later in 2014, and if accepted, a pilot program will begin in 2015 to work through the remaining institutional and technical barriers.

Next Steps

Next step is a pilot program in one of the emergency management districts (about 20 counties) to demonstrate automated data collection to the ICIT data repository, development of aggregated GIS data layers and creation of web services for participating counties. Development and release of an orthoimagery RFP in 2015, and data collection, aggregation and distribution via data repositories and web services continues through 2020. Participation measured on IGI dashboard on IGIC web page. NG911 plan will be released in Jan. 2015 that includes address points.

Attachments

1. Completed business plan

2. Attached documents including user surveys, sample RFP

Feedback on Cooperative Agreements Program

What are the CAP Program strengths and weaknesses? The CAP program has helped Iowa on numerous occasions with planning statewide GIS data infrastructure projects. Iowa has no centralized planning or GIS coordination office at this time, and probably won't for the foreseeable future. Coordination is left to the geospatial community at large, so these grants are critical to provide ongoing support for planning.

Where did it make a difference? Statewide projects like lidar, ortho-imagery, transportation web services and address points were developed either as a direct response to CAP Grant planning exercises or under the umbrella of the IGI conceptual framework, which was developed with CAP Grant funding.

Was the assistance you received sufficient or effective? The assistance Iowa received from FGDC was critical to our nascent coordination activities. While we are saddened that the CAP program no longer has funding to continue this work, we will use this opportunity to finally develop an ongoing program, on our own. The CAP Grant program has been very generous to Iowa and we are very thankful.

What would you recommend that the FGDC do differently? Obviously there are parallels between the state needing the goodwill of local data producers, and the federal government needing data from

each state to make the NSDI possible. This plan outlines a process for the state to provide incentive funding and training to each county so they can fully participate in the IGI. Likewise, the federal government will likely have to provide some incentive for states to participate in a wider system. Analysis for this project shows that a cooperative program can make the overall cost less for all participants, at the expense of tighter standards and simpler contracting with one entity. A nationwide lidar program would be a good example of where supporting state efforts would probably make a better overall program, with more states participating if they could control their own individual projects.