

National Geospatial Advisory Committee

Public-Private Partnership Use Case:

TOMTOM DATA MAINTENANCE PILOTS WITH U.S. STATES



Piloting Public-Private Partnerships: Cooperative Geospatial Data Collection and Maintenance

Background

States, counties, and cities around America have a vital need to have ready access to geospatial data about their jurisdictions. Geospatial data about roads, rail, property, addresses, elevation, soil types, and other data are essential in the delivery of sanitation, postal and other services, assurance of public safety / 911 operations, urban / community planning, land use and ownership, fair taxation, and other services. Geospatial data also underpins a rapidly expanding range of industry provided location services used broadly by government, businesses and citizens to support an array of other uses such as mobile navigation, logistics & transport, real estate development, and business site planning.

In many cases, industry accesses openly available government geospatial data and adds additional information and capabilities to offer “value added” products and services to the marketplace. To avoid costly duplication of data collection and maintenance, Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) are emerging that leverage the capabilities of both the government and private sector to collect, maintain, and apply geospatial data for a range of public and private sector interests.

A Case Study: TomTom Data Maintenance Pilots with U.S. States

TomTom is an international company focused on delivery of high-quality navigation, transportation logistics, mapping data, and location-based services. One of several such companies, TomTom has initiated a series of pilot projects with U.S. States to identify areas of mutual interest in the creation and maintenance of geospatial data related to roads. TomTom’s objective is summarized by TomTom’s Senior Partnership Development Manager Robert Hoyler:

“Our overall objective is to develop a collaborative approach involving TomTom and State governments, with the aim to achieve a mutually beneficial GIS database maintenance process; whereby strategic efficiency & quality gains can be realized by all participants.”

How It Works

While TomTom has their own proprietary process for highly accurate capture of road information for commercial uses, they see potential value in collaboration directly with States that are also collecting and maintaining road data to support a wide range of State service provision and public safety programs. They have established partnership pilots with the State of Utah and others to identify areas of potential value to all parties. Through these pilots, TomTom has identified that their processes to identify new road centerline information (essentially the delineation of a road) can be more current and accurate than existing State-maintained databases. States benefit from receiving these updated or new road delineations to validate their databases. States on the other hand tend to have more detailed descriptions of road characteristics that can be provided in return for the road delineations provided by TomTom. Access to State attribution information about roads is of value to TomTom in reducing the impact to the company of requiring

alternative means of collection of this data (research, field verification), which shortens the timeline to achieve end-user benefits.

With pilots underway in Utah, TomTom is in discussion with other States including Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, New Jersey, and New York regarding potential pilots with those States.

Why It Works

The P3 piloting approach that TomTom has taken in partnership with Utah works because it allows public and private sector partners to work together informally and cooperatively to identify, test, and validate approaches and discover areas of mutual benefit before making formal commitments. Piloting also enables stakeholders to test organizational agreements, resourcing, and governance methods that would need to be in place to operationalize P3 arrangements for the long term. Furthermore, pilots provide opportunity for stakeholders to better understand and address the potential implications to their business models, intellectual property rights ownership, etc.

Lessons Learned

One of the major challenges expressed by TomTom as a result of these pilots is great sensitivity regarding potential impacts to the private sector business model when such collaboration occurs. Will such arrangements negatively impact markets or profits? What are the implications to intellectual property? These are understandable concerns for any private sector organization. However, through pilot projects stakeholders can better understand potential areas of risk and reward that can help inform decisions and shape approaches to operationalizing activities in partnerships.

Conclusions

This case study illustrates the significant value of pilot initiatives as a collaborative method to prototype and test approaches and reveal outcomes that provide mutual benefit to public and private sector stakeholders. The limited scope of these initiatives is an incentive to test approaches before committing to long term operations through more formal partnership agreements. This case study also identifies the potential for P3s to be established based largely on mutual benefit, with minimal additional resource / funding investment needed to provide benefit to all parties.