

# INTERIM PROJECT REPORT

*September 15, 2006*

## **NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program Strategic and Business Plan Development in Support of the NSDI Future Directions Fifty States Initiative**



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## NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program

### *Fifty States Initiative: Strategic and Business Plan Development in Support of the NSDI Future Directions Fifty States Initiative*

#### Interim Project Report

<u>Cooperative Agreement Number:</u>	<b>06HQAG0100</b>
<u>Project Title:</u>	<b>Strategic and Business Plan Development for Maryland in Support of NSDI Future Directions 50 States Initiative</b>
<u>Project Start and End Dates:</u>	<b>March 16, 2006 – March 15, 2007</b>
<u>Lead Project Organization:</u>	<b>Towson University Center for GIS Maryland State Geographic Information Committee</b>
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#### Summary of Project Activities

Through a 2006 National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) Cooperative Agreement Program (CAP) grant, a partnership of the Towson University Center for Geographic Information Sciences (CGIS) and the Maryland State Geographic Information Committee (MSGIC) has engaged stakeholders in Maryland to develop a Strategic Plan and a Business Plan for GIS Coordination in Maryland. This interim report describes project activities and their level of success to date.

#### Objectives

Work throughout the first half of the project period focused on Strategic Planning for GIS Coordination in Maryland. The plan covers the following critical items:

- Creating a statewide office to coordinate GIS resources.
- Strengthening the effectiveness of MSGIC, an all-volunteer coordinating committee.

- Improving participation in and contribution of statewide geospatial information activities among all stakeholders.
- Gaining recognition from state level governmental and legislative entities.
- Improving geospatial data discovery, access, and use.
- Increasing participation in national geospatial data programs.
- Working toward sustainable funding mechanisms.

### Key Accomplishments as of August 2006

I. Prior to forming a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), project staff designed a plan for committee composition and size, established guiding principles, and developed a workable timetable. Pre-planning enabled project staff to go into the first SPC meeting prepared with a structure for the planning process, which allowed committee members to focus more quickly on critical issues. During the pre-planning process, staff accomplished the following specific tasks.

1. Set up a communications portal for SPC members through MS SharePoint. The portal is accessible by login and allows authorized users to actively participate in the document writing and editing process; post and receive announcements; post and view presentations; and access a comprehensive contact list.
2. Drafted a charter for the Strategic Planning Committee that states the mission, size, composition and components, goals, objectives, tasks, and timetable for the strategic and business plans. The charter is included in this report as *Appendix A*.
3. Drafted a Communications Plan that covers information dissemination, branding, and marketing. The Communications Plan is included in this report as *Appendix B*.
4. Created several iterations of a Maryland Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) logo.
5. Created a handout of information about GIS Coordination in Maryland. The handout was distributed via the MSGIC booth at the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) conference that was held in Ocean City on August 15-18, 2006. The handout is included in this report as *Appendix C*.
6. Identified the GIS stakeholder agencies and organizations in Maryland, along with the associated individuals who have an interest in the final outcome of the project. From that list of individuals, project staff identified a diverse group that is inclusive of government, private, and non-government organizations in a broad geographic area to represent their organizations' interests and needs as members of SPC. Suggestions of other potential members were also solicited to ensure equitable representation.

7. Issued formal invitations to the heads of agencies, organizations, departments, and divisions to request permission for the selected individuals to serve on the committee or for additional or alternate representatives.

II. Communication and outreach are an essential component of Maryland's move toward improved coordination. The following outreach activities have occurred as part of this project.

1. As of August 2006, the project team coordinated and hosted two Strategic Planning Committee meetings. The minutes of both meetings are attached to this report as *Appendix D*.
2. Multiple meetings have occurred with executive leadership in Maryland to generate awareness and support for GIS coordination in Maryland and the need for a centralized office and/or staff. Individuals include:
  - a. Ellis Kitchen, State CIO (Department of Budget and Management);
  - b. Chris Geldart, Assistant Director of Homeland Security (Governor's Office of Homeland Security);
  - c. Neil Peterson, Administrator, MD State Highway Administration;
  - d. Raja Veeramacheni, Director, Planning & Preliminary Engineering, MD State Highway Administration;
  - e. John Droneburg, Director, Maryland Emergency Management Agency;
  - f. C. Ronald Franks, Secretary, MD Department of Natural Resources;
  - g. Frank Dawson, Assistant Secretary, MD Department of Natural Resources;
  - h. Dr. Mary Livers, Deputy Director Operations, Department of Public Safety and Corrections;
  - i. Gordon Deans, Executive Director, Emergency Numbers System Board;
  - j. James Robe, Howard County Executive;
  - k. Wilson Parran, Calvert County Board of Commissioners.
3. Multiple presentations were made to GIS user groups across Maryland to generate awareness and support for GIS coordination in Maryland, including:
  - a. Eastern Maryland ESRI User Group (June 28, 2006);
  - b. MSGIC Summer Quarterly Meeting (July 19, 2006);
  - c. Western Maryland ESRI User Group (July 28, 2006);
  - d. Central Maryland ESRI User Group (August 30, 2006).
4. Coordination was achieved with the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) effort to create a Federated Street Centerline layer that enables coordination between SHA and local county GIS offices.

5. Coordination was achieved with the MSGIC effort to establish a Cooperative Agreement to purchase Orthoimagery for the entire state of Maryland. This effort currently involves contribution and partnership between federal, state, local, private, academic, and non-profit organizations.
6. Project staff redesigned Maryland's GIS Web Portal, which can be found at <http://www.MarylandGIS.net>, to include current information about GIS coordination activities. This Web site is providing public visibility for Maryland's *Fifty States Initiative* efforts and serves as a means for stakeholder input.

III. The project team wrote a draft Strategic Plan, which is included in this report as *Appendix E*.

### Successes

1. All agencies and organizations invited to be members of SPC replied positively, for a participation level of 100%.
2. Pre-planning proved to be highly successful relative to streamlining the discussion and strategic planning process. The first SPC meeting provided a forum for input on specific needs, considerations, and next steps. The second meeting focused on primary and secondary items to be included in the strategic plan. During the second meeting, Maryland's willingness to support the plan at least incrementally was made clear.
3. Because they are involved in this project, key individuals in Maryland agencies and departments who are not schooled in GIS use are gaining a broader understanding of the functions and importance of GIS in all levels of government. The need for and the potential benefits of statewide coordination that is at least partially funded by the state and supported more actively by state leadership is being clearly described during SPC meetings. The prevailing attitude about achieving statewide coordination is more favorable now that the issues are better understood, and MSGIC's priorities are being recognized to a broader audience.
4. The State CIO has identified GIS Coordination and establishing data standards (including GIS) as formal IT Priorities for Maryland during 2008. The "State of Maryland Information Technology Master Plan 2008" can be found at:

[http://dbm.maryland.gov/dbm\\_publishing/public\\_content/dbm\\_search/technology/policyplanning/fy2008stateitmp.pdf](http://dbm.maryland.gov/dbm_publishing/public_content/dbm_search/technology/policyplanning/fy2008stateitmp.pdf)

5. Two important data projects in Maryland have played a significant role in illustrating the need for statewide coordination. The Maryland Cooperative Centerline Program is a data sharing process between the State Highway Administration and local governments. The Maryland Statewide Orthoimagery Partnership is an effort to acquire high resolution digital imagery for the entire state that will meet the needs of federal, state, and local government agencies and others within the state. MSGIC, Maryland agencies, TU-

CGIS, and the NSDI/USGS *The National Map Project* all have an active role in these cooperative projects that are recognized as excellent centerpieces around which to build a case for statewide GIS coordination.

### Next Steps

Following SPC approval of a final draft of the Strategic Plan, the Business Plan will be drafted, edited, and approved. The individuals in Maryland government or legislature will be identified who can and will champion the plans and encourage statewide adoption and funding.

The SPC anticipates that the USGS State Liaison will continue to participate in the planning process. At present, this assistance is sufficient.

### Project Partners' Response to the Cooperative Agreements Program

Since 2000, CGIS and MSGIC have produced useful GIS and metadata products through a series of USGS/NSDI/FGDC CAP grants. Without the strength of USGS assistance, CGIS and MSGIC would have difficulty continuing their commitment to work toward representing and meeting the needs of Maryland's GIS community, and by extension, the nation's.

Maryland's USGS state liaison, Roger Barlow, has devoted significant energy and attention to the CGIS/MSGIC projects. His input, advice, encouragement, and attention to the current Category 3: *Fifty States Initiative* grant is invaluable. The GIS Coordination project is already well regarded by key agency leaders in Maryland. With their support, the anticipated implementation will advance Maryland's contribution to NSDI and validate USGS funding for the development stage.