CALIFORNIA GIS STRATEGIC PLAN PHASE 2: REGIONAL PARTICIPATION

Regional Workshop #3:
Carson, CA
October 24, 2007

Prepared for:

California GIS Council &
California Geographic Information Association

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I. PREWORKSHOP SURVEY RESULTS

A. SoCal GIS
1) Regional Organizational Capacity
- Technology is suitable for networking, data storage, data exchange, hardware, and software capabilities.
- Funding is ranked 3 on a 1 to 4 (minimal) scale. Cost sharing agreements are the only listed funding mechanism.
- There are <=5 staff available to support GIS efforts. There are minimal on-site paid employees, and no retained consultants or volunteers.
- Strong executive support is often available.
- There is no formal process for project oversight.

2) California Spatial Data Infrastructure
- This region has none of the seven core framework and eleven California-centric data theme datasets available.

- The top 5 regional datasets this region would like to develop next are:
    - Ortho Imagery
    - Transportation
    - Street Addressing
    - Utilities
    - Flood Hazards

3) Regional Implementation
- This region has used the California Spatial Library but not the 50 States Initiative, the Imagery for the Nation or the California Environmental Information Catalog,
- The establishment of a GIO is viewed as important.
- This region sees the GIO fulfilling the following responsibilities:
    - Provide leadership in the development and sharing of geospatial data
    - Coordinate and administer grants related to geospatial information and geographic information systems

- This region believes the GIO should be placed in the new office of the State's Chief Information Officer.

II. REGIONAL WORKSHOP 3 SUMMARY

ATTENDENCE

Workshop 3 had representation from SoCalGIS and the Channel Islands Regional GIS Collaborative (one representative). In all, 15 individuals and two Collaboratives were present for the discussion. 7 individuals were from local government, 3 from state government, 1 from federal government, and 5 from private entities.

CALIFORNIA PHASE II STRATEGIC PLAN- REGIONAL WORKSHOP 3
Carson, CA

CURRENT SITUATION

1) SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Communication/Coordination • There are plenty of initiatives, funding, staff, and expertise. Coordination is starting to improve. • Los Angeles County now has a GIO so coordination has improved and they meet regularly.	• There is still a challenge with coordinating all regional efforts. • It is hard to determine the GIS representative for an area, and there is not always a representative or direct contact with the State. • The large size of Los Angeles County makes coordination and communication difficult. • There is no formal structure of who's in charge of what. • Many people hear about meetings by word of mouth. Could there be a more formalized process? • No Orange County representation at this workshop.	• It would be beneficial to have a city representative on the National Council. The city extent is as large as some states. • SCAG could communicate and promote their datasets better through SoCal GIS. • Enhance the current Regional Collaborative contact list to a larger audience. • Its been 6 months since there was a SoCal GIS meeting, because its hard to get somebody to host a meeting. Private companies are interested in hosting.	•
Data Sharing • SCAG has a data task force.	• Data links on websites do not always work. Data should be stored on site. CASIL data is often old, not accurate, or not detailed enough. • It is hard to find data (especially free data). Some information might be available, but not the necessary directions for use. • Los Angeles County has huge Departments creating and maintaining data sets. There are also holes in data available.	• The state could provide more links to more places where data is available and the formats that they are in. • Direction on how to convert census.gov data. • SCAG is making a website with links to mapping applications and some data. This could be built upon. • CASIL appears to not support data sharing unless it has a	• They are currently licensing most data from private vendors because there is not enough money to create and maintain data sets. • Unable to move licensed third party data sets to CASIL. • The county has certain large departments that are responsible for datasets but aren't always involved in collaborative efforts. Its takes

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
	• A lot of people don't realize that SCAG has regional datasets and keeps them current.	statewide coverage.	time to figure out who maintains and updates data and who is responsible for getting it to the next level.
Funding •	• The ability to leverage federal funding needs to be improved. • We don't have a regional focus to get grants to build/maintain data sets.	• It would be beneficial to hire a grantwriter.	•
Data Development • Los Angeles County and the City of Los Angeles have a good Imagery Consortium project. They have talked about developing other datasets such as addresses and building footprints.	•	• Meetings without a goal will serve no purpose. Developing specific data layers could be a goal.	

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REQUIREMENTS

1) Regional Discussion of Data Sharing and Standards

LA County confirmed that for the 7 core data themes, they have:
- Cadastral
- Imagery
- Transportation
- Elevation
- Hydrography
- Geodetic Control
- Governmental Units

and for the 11 CA centric data themes, they have:
- Street Addressing (partial)
- Utilities (unsure)
- Public Land Conveyance Records (unsure)
- Buildings and Facilities (partial)
- Flood Hazards
- Vegetation (from the state)
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Demographic Statistics (census)
- Wetlands (boundaries)
- Earth Cover

Because regional and local dataset standards are typically higher (accuracy, feature types, and attributes) than state standards, regions would be willing to implement standards. A lack of standardized schemas, feature classes and attributes is on the largest limitations in the ability to roll data up from the local to the state level. At the moment there has not yet been discussion regarding whose standards and what kind of standards will be used. Culver City is look at using spatial data standards and beginning a data migration standard. SCAG noted that they have 5 of the 6 county parcel data sets for their charter that can be shared for emergency response. SCAG also noted they use FGDC standards.

The question was asked, are there federal or regional demands that require sharing data or specific data formats? Answers included yes in the areas of:

Emergency Response. This is a request that is turning into a routine. The biggest request is for parcels, but Census data is another popular data set requested.

SCAG must put out regional transportation improvement projects and they have just built a web application that provides this data.

States share information relating to the West Nile Virus. www.westnile.ca.gov is coordinated at the state level by contacting specific agencies who have GPSed the necessary information.

Vitals on death/birth certificates and Sheriff/sex offender information. It is difficult to get spatial data for a lot of these data sets and regeocoding is a big undertaking.

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The Joint Regional Information Center performs intelligence gathering and acquires public works, flood control, and statewide endangered species, but much of this information is not made available to the public.

Public Works supports flood control requests.

2) Regional Discussion of Federated Data Efforts and Incentives for Participation

There is a question of who will provide funding and be responsible for the servers if a federated data model is adopted. Local infrastructure is less of a concern than staffing. SCAG (which covers Ventura, LA, Riverside, San Bernardino, Orange, and Imperial) has staff but not enough bandwidth. Consultants send hard drives to transfer data. The goal of SCAG is to be the regional information host. In order to make data compatible and understandable, they write metadata when it is not available. They do have a wide range of data for their region.

There needs to be a repository for data for smaller entities. SCAG is currently trying to build a portal. Funding agencies have to make it a priority for someone to be the "node."

The fires will highlight the need for action, but still, who will pay for it? It's desirable but not feasible. Money goes to the Joint Regional Intelligence Center. They call you to obtain data but it is difficult to see the data when they are done; little likelyhood of bi-directional data sharing.

Consistency and frequency for updating data is a problem for CIRGIS. They have created a "least common denominator" data model, but problems arise when you update from data sources with very different schema. Funding is necessary but not available.

IMPLEMENTATION

1) State Support

Regional Collaboratives would like, from the state:

- **Legislature:** The state should develop legislature that supports the sharing of data, especially among government agencies. Currently, some government agencies charge other government agencies for data, and this should not happen.

- **Legal:** The courts rule against Assessors who charge for their parcel base sets a legal foundation for data sharing. Expand the public records act to share information especially between government agencies.

- **Standards**: Without standards it is difficult to compare parcels across county lines. Someone needs to establish a "least common denominator" framework that will allow for this process. This model could be designed others could predictably extract and load data. Others confirmed that it would be helpful to have a basic standard of fields and structure for when they are developing data and act as a guide to update legacy data.

  Every three years SCAG updates general plans and standards. This process takes awhile because they receive data in all different formats. Conversely, Counties then stated that

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they have to reformat SCAG data when they receive it, to match their format. There is a
need for a standard or previously established mapping to get from here to there.

- **Money/Grants:** Regions would like the state to act as a statewide clearinghouse, and
  fund staff who would regional and local data and format to a common standard.

- **Act as an advocate for GIS:** An State individual should serve as an advocate for GIS
  and talk about business reasons why agencies should invest (even if only by example).

2) Governance

A discussion began around the need and roles of a potential GIO. The comment was made, in the
absence of a GIO, the CIO should be asked to take one some of these responsibilities.

In the County, the GIO position resulted from an assessment and evaluation that ultimately
provided justification for the position. The major argument for the position was that there's a lot
of GIS that's not coordinated.

The question was asked, what could the council be doing since there is not currently a GIO?
Answers included:

- There is a need for more publicity. The Council should find more avenues that let GIS
  practitioners know about GIS related organizations (SoCal GIS, etc.) and vice versa.
  Even if the money were available, there is no way to spread the word. Increase the
  relevance of the CA GIS Council to regional and local agencies. While travel restrictions
  are apparent there is no substitute for face time.

- The Council is/was made up of mostly State employees that are/were removed from the
  activities within the regions. The regions would like representation. There is a lot of
  history behind this issue. The Council has been restructured several times in the past.

The region believes there is incredible value to a CA-SDI. Currently, it is difficult to quickly find
data when necessary. Google or USGS map services are good options if you need to go outside
your boundaries.