



August 9, 2005

Ms. Jill Saligoe-Simmel, Ph.D.  
Indiana Geographic Information Council, Inc.  
Indiana State Library, GIS  
140 North Senate Avenue, Room 306  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Jill,

I want to express to you my enthusiastic support for the 2005 statewide orthophoto project. The orthophotos will enhance the safety and welfare of the citizens of Indiana, and will improve the cost effectiveness of local, state, and federal government. This will benefit all Hoosiers in.

As you know, Hamilton County has been one of the leading counties in the state when it comes to GIS. There are a number of reasons for this. Our high rate of sustained growth has made the benefits of GIS even more dramatic than usual. We have been blessed with elected officials in Hamilton County who have educated themselves about GIS and continue to be involved with our GIS program on a regular basis. Finally, our policy of freely sharing our GIS data with the cities and towns in Hamilton County has led to unprecedented cooperation in a number of other initiatives.

I often receive calls from smaller counties who want to learn from us how we have developed and supported our GIS program in Hamilton County. For smaller counties, there are many barriers to GIS, not the least of which is cost. I believe the statewide orthophotography program will help smaller counties with fewer resources get a jump start into GIS so they can begin to understand its benefits.

There are too many benefits of the statewide orthophotography program to detail in this letter, but some of the more obvious ones that come to mind are:

- **Current data** - Hamilton County added over 5,000 new parcels in the year ending March 1, 2005. We need new aerial photography each year just to keep up with our rapid growth.
- **E-911** - Every county needs an up to date and accurate road centerline layer for E-911. Current aerial photography is an excellent way to develop and/or update this layer.
- **Better federal and state decisions** - TIGER/Line files from the Census Bureau and Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) from FEMA are examples of federally produced maps that greatly affect local government. Both federal and state government use these maps to make decisions that affect us locally. Unfortunately, these maps are not nearly as accurate and are updated far less frequently than maps produced by local government. This project will produce credible, current, and highly accurate orthophotography that will be used to realign these maps so that federal and state decisions affecting local government can be made using the best possible data.

Jill, I want to also take this opportunity to recognize that this project was your dream. You were the only one with a dream this big and the skills and determination to turn it into a reality. This project would never have happened without your vision, leadership, and tenacity. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Larry C. Stout, PE, GISP  
GIS Manager