



## **IGIC 2009 Local Government GIS Coordinators Forum**

### **Submitted Questions & Answers**

### **September 25, 2009**

Due to time constraints, these questions were not addressed – or not fully addressed – at the Forum itself. As a courtesy to attendees, answers have been provided by IGIC members and volunteers.

#### **General Questions**

##### **Phil Worrall, IGIC Executive Director**

Q: Are there resources (white papers, tech support, etc.) for participating counties to help them stand up WFS for in-house ArcGIS Server implementation and testing?

A: Yes. See [www.igic.org/projects/indianamap/ArcGIS\\_Server\\_WFS\\_Service.pdf](http://www.igic.org/projects/indianamap/ArcGIS_Server_WFS_Service.pdf)

Q: Is there a set schema for points and lines for statewide CAD (computer aided drafting)?

A: The IGIC's CAD-GIS Workgroup is developing a standard for data translation between the two formats. The current specifications can be found at:

[www.igic.org/committees/cadgisint.html](http://www.igic.org/committees/cadgisint.html)

Q: Any thoughts to having a public map library online for publishing updates?

A: We currently provide links to both dynamic and static maps available on the internet at [www.igic.org/maps/index.html](http://www.igic.org/maps/index.html) and [www.indianamap.org/maps](http://www.indianamap.org/maps). We try to keep these links up to date, so if you know of additional sites or resources to add, please email [info@igic.org](mailto:info@igic.org)

Q: How can we configure to publish the collection of section corner data around the state?

A: IGIC and ISPLS (Indiana Society of Professional Land Surveyors) have jointly developed a Tie Card Program to allow County Surveyors to scan and digitize their section corner information onto the IndianaMap. The Tie Card methodology, resources and training video are available at no cost. For more information visit our Tie Card Project web site [www.igic.org/projects/tiecard/index.html](http://www.igic.org/projects/tiecard/index.html). An example of tie card data published on the IndianaMap for Bartholomew County, IN can be seen by clicking visiting <http://bit.ly/C5KON>.

Q: How/where can I find water hydrant features? My county has some pretty good sources, but I believe it's lacking these.

A: Fire hydrants are not available on the IndianaMap. You can check the GIS (Ramona) Inventory <http://in.gisinventory.net> to see if hydrant data is available in your county. Alternatively, the individual city, regional, or private water utilities serving your county, or local fire departments should have maps of hydrant locations, though these may not be in digital format.

Q: Are data sharing grant counties using COTS or open-source software for their WFS services and/or new websites?

A: Different counties use COTS software like ArcGIS Server, or open-source software like MapServer to stand-up their WFS services. These services can be stood up in conjunction with a web-mapping viewing application, but a web-mapping site is not a requirement for WFS. A number of counties rely on their GIS service provider (e.g., WTH, Sidwell, 39-Degrees North, The Schneider Corporation, etc.) to set up and host their WFS services.

Q: I would like to know more about open-source GIS software. In tough economic times it's virtually impossible to add more services. The problem I've seen with open-source is interoperability.

A: There are a number of open-source packages like GRASS and MapServer, as well as free GIS viewing software like AccuGlobe and ArcExplorer. IGIC provide links to these products at [www.igic.org/links](http://www.igic.org/links), but would also recommend simply Googleing "FREE GIS Software" or "Open-source GIS Software." Wikipedia also maintains a good list of free [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Free\\_GIS\\_software](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Free_GIS_software) and Open Source [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_GIS\\_software](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_GIS_software) GIS software.

Q: How do you get your local departments to use the GIS data you have in place now?

A: By making your data as easy as possible to use and integrating it into their normal workflows and projects. Also, providing a training class on where and how to access and use the data can help. We would suggest meeting with each department to discuss their exact needs and prepare a plan, including follow-up and on-going support for each group.

Q: It would be helpful if we had a compilation of data acquisition standards, RFP examples, or a guidance group to assist local folks to acquire data. That would help us get the most for our money when acquiring new data and promote data standardization.

A: Access to a number GIS standards are available through the IGIC web site at [www.igic.org/standards](http://www.igic.org/standards). Specific Framework Data standards can be found on the home pages of IGIC's various IndianaMap Workgroups [www.igic.org/projects/frameworkplans.html](http://www.igic.org/projects/frameworkplans.html). For sample RFPs and other information, please email your specific request to the IGIC office at [info@igic.org](mailto:info@igic.org).

Q: Is IGIC assisting the State with a standardized way of attributing addresses?

A: Yes! As part of our 2007 Address Integration Project we developed a point address and road centerline schema for addressing. This template was then incorporated into our 2008 Data Sharing Initiative, and subsequently into the data model for all data being harvested to the IndianaMap.

Q: What grants if any are out there for local (city) government to help support their GIS departments?

A: See IGIC Seminar Presentation - **Grants and Other Funding Sources for GIS** posted on the IGIC website at [www.igic.org/training/seminars.html](http://www.igic.org/training/seminars.html) or visit our funding pages [www.igic.org/funding](http://www.igic.org/funding).

## IndianaMap

Rick Hill, Indiana Geological Survey and Anna Radue, Indiana University – UITS

Q: What is a Web Feature Service and how is it being used?

A: There are two common types of web mapping services: Web Map Services (WMS) and Web Feature Services (WFS). WMS produces a static image that is downloaded into the user's desktop software. No editing of the symbology or spatial analysis (such as clipping or contouring) is possible. Examples include Google Earth, the IndianaMap, and the seven IndianaMap Framework services. In contrast, WFS permits the user to interact with GIS data residing on a remote server, allowing them to utilize a variety of desktop GIS tools.

Q: Is there going to be a more friendly way of using the state map site?

A: Every attempt has been made to make the site as user-friendly as possible. Standard GIS tools are used, narrated video tutorials are available, and individual requests for assistance are answered promptly. However, given the large number of data layers (more than 230) and GIS tools (more than 30) that are included on the site in order to serve the widest possible audience, the site has a certain basic level of complexity. We continue to consider improvements that can be made, but there is currently no permanent source of funding to implement any extensive re-designs.

Q: Some groups have no infrastructure, so if a dataset can be created to support a State organization or group, will the IndianaMap host their data?

A: Yes. If a statewide or regional dataset (with metadata) is made publicly available, it will be considered for inclusion on the IndianaMap.

Q: Can IHAPI (Indiana Historical Aerial Photo Index) be streamed into ArcGIS using WMS/WFS?

A: No, because the two data layers that are used by IHAPI are not structured for use in desktop GIS software.

Q: What additional map services are being considered with the IndianaMap?

A: See answer to next question. Additionally, we have considered using KML, Flex, Silverlight, and WFS services. However, KML and WFS are probably not appropriate for the IndianaMap Atlas because of its size and complexity. However, we are still considering possible future conversion of the IndianaMap to Flex and Silverlight, pending adoption of ArcGIS server technology. The seven IndianaMap Framework services will be available as WFS services in the near future.

Q: Could the IndianaMap and its WMS's get mashed up with Google Earth and Microsoft Bing maps?

A1: UITS is working with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security to create map caches of the most recent Indiana orthophotography. These new ArcGIS Server mapping services are in development. The caches will have the same projection and scales as Google and Bing to support mashups.

A2: The Indiana Geological Survey is also looking into these possibilities. However, such mashups may not be appropriate because of the size and complexity of the complete IndianaMap.

A3: IGIC is working with ESRI's Flex API to develop custom "Theme" based mashups from the data available in the IndianaMap. These mashups will not replace the full IndianaMap, but will provide thematic map views of various data layers to provide information about flood events, home foreclosures, brownfields, economic development, etc.

Q: What is the process for adding data to the IndianaMap?

A: Potential contributors to the IndianaMap should contact Phil Worrall, who will pass the request to the IndianaMap Steering Committee for consideration. If recommended for inclusion, the dataset (together with FGDC-compliant metadata) will be provided to the

Indiana Geological Survey, who will submit the dataset and metadata for review. Following completion of revisions, if needed, the dataset will be posted on the IndianaMap during the next regularly scheduled update (which occur on the first Tuesday of each month).

Q: How is the IndianaMap being used to support The National Map and the National Spatial Data Infrastructure?

A: Geospatial One Stop (GOS) harvests metadata information once a week from the IndianaMap and automatically provides this information to The National Map. This could be improved, a task Jim Sparks, Indiana GIO, is working on. The best data is local data and funding must begin here.

Q: All of the people (3 so far) I have sent to the UITS to download orthophotography have called back to say it's not working or too slow. What could be a possible solution for these customers?

A: At the beginning of the semester UITS had an issue with the two Apache web servers. UITS is working to move these servers to new hardware which should improve the download availability. Here are Knowledge Base articles that may provide more information: <http://kb.iu.edu/data/aufr.html> and <http://kb.iu.edu/data/atxb.html>.

Another issue is size of the download. The customer's bandwidth usually determines the download process, and these are very large images. As an alternative, users can always contact the dataset owner and request the data. The UITS site has web pages describing each dataset and the contacts. Finally, the downloading may be easier from your home than business. It just depends on network traffic.

Also, please keep in mind these services are not supported by any funding, but we do our best. UITS's staff contact email is readily available. We always respond to user emails and work to find a resolution!

Q: How can I find out how to submit my County's GIS data to the IndianaMap?

A: Potential contributors to the IndianaMap should contact Phil Worrall, who will pass the request to the IndianaMap Steering Committee for consideration. If recommended for inclusion, the dataset (together with FGDC-compliant metadata) will be provided to the Indiana Geological Survey, who will submit the dataset and metadata for review. Following completion of revisions, if needed, the dataset will be posted on the IndianaMap Atlas during the next regularly scheduled update (which occur on the first Tuesday of each month).

## **GIS Inventory (Ramona)**

### **Phil Worrall, IGIC Executive Director**

Q: What is Ramona?

A: The GIS Inventory (Ramona) is a web tool developed and maintained by the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC). Each of the 50 States has its own web page and administrators. For Indiana the GIO and IGIC Executive Director are administrators.

Q: Is there a web site to help?

A: Yes, the page is <http://in.gisinventory.net/>. The page can also be accessed from the IGIC web site by selecting "Maps & Data > Data Inventory" from the top pull-down menu.

Q: How do I add my contact and data information into the GIS Inventory (Ramona)?

A: In the upper right-hand corner of the GIS Inventory (Ramona) web page <http://in.gisinventory.net> there is a CREATE ACCOUNT button. As part of this process you will add your contact and data information. To update your information use the LOG IN button.

Q: Can the GIS Inventory (Ramona) be set up so that we can add info about data we know of, but are not the steward of?

A: You can, but there is no way to identify a different Steward. You would be the point of contact for any inquiries regarding that data. If you are the City, Town or County GIS Coordinator that would be an acceptable way to inventory all of your data holdings.

## **IGIC's Indiana GIS Response Corps** **Christina McCullough, Indiana National Guard**

Q: What constitutes an emergency?

A: Usually, a "jurisdiction" will declare an emergency per the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS).

Q: How many Indiana GIS Response Corps volunteers are in Hamilton County?

A: So far, there are two members in Hamilton County.

Q: Is there a limit of volunteers per county?

A: At present, there are no limits.

Q: If you volunteer for the Indiana GIS Response Corps do you have to go on site in an emergency?

A: It will depend upon the incident and the type of GIS support needed. Because the group is so new, many procedures are still being developed.

Q: If you volunteer, how does one get approval from work? Are there forms?

A: Yes. Emergency Management Area Coordinators (EMACs) are usually the official document.

Q: Is the Response Corps going to educate EMA directors on the importance of local GIS and working with GIS staff?

A: Yes. We are going to start our work with counties where the GIS and EMA personnel already work together in response and recovery efforts during emergencies. We will use these as case studies to develop our procedures and templates to use in a future outreach and education initiative with other counties. The idea is to start locally by having the EMA and GIS staff to work together, then expand to provide cross-jurisdictional support. We will work and coordinate these efforts with Roger Koelpin at the Indiana Department of Homeland Security through the entire process.

## **State Police CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) Project** **Jim Sparks, Indiana GIO**

Q: Will the statewide State Police CAD system use existing county 911 maps (paid for by the monthly charges to our phone bills), or will they compile yet another GIS dataset?

A: The statewide computer aided dispatch system will use county address data from the Data Sharing Initiative that has been integrated into a statewide layer. In many, but not all, cases this data is the same as the 911 data. The planners for the CAD project are very happy to

get their data from one (or maybe two) places rather than 92 (or more) places. It is not clear yet what source will be used to fill in data for those counties that are not part of the data sharing initiative. Whatever it is, it's probably not going to be as accurate or up-to-date as the statewide layer which will be updated about once per month.

Q: Will the statewide State Police CAD system be based on street centerline, point address, or a combination of both?

A: Point Addresses.

Q: Is there a set schema for points and lines?

A: They will start with the statewide data layer schema. It is unknown if that schema will be changed.

## **Indiana Broadband Mapping Project**

### **Jim Sparks, Indiana GIO**

Q: How much of the \$1.3 million for data sharing will go to each county?

A: If this budget is approved, each participating county will receive enough to pay for continuing the WFS feed for two additional years.

Q: Previous efforts have focused on the County, so what funding or grant opportunities will make it down to local City/Town level?

A: Grant opportunities are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and almost always happen because we are able to make a case as to why GIS helps another agency. It would be worthwhile to convene a group from Cities and Towns to explore how their GIS data or applications might be used to support other activities. Other funding vehicles (legislative, fees, etc.) can be more easily directed and distributed across the GIS community. However, as you know, we have no funding at this time.

Q: What is the plan for developing useable broadband (DSL, cable, wireless, fiber) maps?

A: A substantially complete map is needed quickly (February 2010). In Phase One, we will integrate existing public domain data. In Phase 2 (after February 1, 2010), we will contact service providers to get better data and improve the map. In Phase 3, the data layer will be put into "maintenance mode." Some of the information collected from providers may have to be protected.

## **Indiana Data Sharing Initiative**

### **Jim Sparks, Indiana GIO**

Q: How do I get started with a data sharing agreement?

A: Contact Jim Sparks, Indiana GIO [jsparks@iot.IN.gov](mailto:jsparks@iot.IN.gov)

Q: When current agreements expire is the State going to help with funding to keep data current and maintained for the IndianaMap?

A: Yes. If the budget for the Broadband Mapping Project is approved, each participating county will receive enough to pay for continuing the WFS feed for two additional years.

Q: Have counties with no GIS data to share signed the agreement anyway to show support and future commitment?

A: No. The agreement was structured exclusively to make a data transfer happen.

Q: For counties that do not have all four layers to share, are we providing any grants or resources to help create these layers?

A: Potentially. As was requested in the initial data sharing invitation letter, counties in this situation should contact the GIO.

Q: How did the Geographic Information Officer and IGIC promote the data sharing initiative?

A: Letters went to the County Commissioners which laid out a business case for it. IGIC Road Shows around the state educated locals on the value of sharing their local data.

Q: Why are counties not participating? Why not?

A: Currently 18 counties are not participating. There are 3-4 that do not have the data to share. Some counties have a business model that does not include the "free access" model of the IndianaMap.

Q: How does the IndianaMap provide data to The National Map?

A: Geospatial One Stop (GOS) harvests metadata information once a week from the IndianaMap and automatically provides this information to The National Map. This could be improved, a task the GIO is working on. The best data is local data and funding must begin here.

## **Indiana Statewide Orthophotography Program**

### **Jim Stout, IGIC Orthophotography Workgroup Chair**

Q: Why is the state flown South-North instead of East-West?

A: Photos are taken after the snow is gone, but before leaves come out. This is a short window of time. By flying south to north, we extend this window. We can start in the south in February and finish the north in late April – which adds three weeks.

Q: What are the order of the flights?

A: There has not been a decision yet about which part of the state will be first. Our current thinking is that it may be a mix of one-third of the state, and high-change counties.

Q: Will the orthophotography be flown leaf-off?

A: Yes. In addition, the National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP) still plans to do summer 1-meter photos every couple of years.

Q: 6-inch pixel photography or better still needs to be the standard for any orthophotography project.

A: We agree completely. The issue is funding. For all of Indiana, 2-foot satellite photos cost about \$700,000; 1-foot orthophotography costs about \$1,500,000; 6-inch orthophotography costs about \$5,500,000.

Q: Will we have to wait another 5 years for the next fly-over?

A: The 2005 Orthophotography Project was funded with a one-time grant opportunity. There has not been funding for another project; so it is unknown when the next flight will be. We are preparing a request-for-proposal for a 2010-2012 flight plan that would have an option for renewal in 2013-2015, but nothing is certain at all yet.

Q: What projected costs are estimated to upgrade the 2-foot imagery to 1-foot or 6-inch?

A: Our guess is that the cost to buy-up from 2-foot to 1-foot is about \$25/square mile; and from 1-foot to 6-inch is about \$100/ square mile. Understand, these are just estimates, and we won't know real costs until we see the responses to the RFP.

Q: What side (or third) of the state goes first?

A: It is not determined. We are open to arguments for what the priorities should be.

Q: What could be done to continue statewide data acquisition (orthophotography, LiDAR, etc.) to insure a consistent statewide data set?

A: Funding. Contact your legislators about how valuable these data are.

Q: How can local GIS folks help make this program happen?

A: Join the IGIC Legislative Committee [www.igic.org/committees/leg.html](http://www.igic.org/committees/leg.html). Send us your stories about how you use photos, and the issues when you don't have up-to-date photos. Keep your local politicians informed about the value of orthophotography products.

Q: When will we be informed of the progress of the Statewide Orthophotography Program?

A: The Orthophotography Workgroup makes regular updates to the IGIC Board; you can read these updates in the minutes, or by visiting the Workgroup's webpages at [www.igic.org/committees/orthos.html](http://www.igic.org/committees/orthos.html). In brief, we approached legislators and state agencies, and monitored grant opportunities. We wrote a position paper and a draft brochure regarding a statewide orthophotography program, and are in the process of drafting a request-for-proposal to see what kinds of prices we can get for a 2010 flight.

Q: Wouldn't it be better to get funding from the counties to do our aerial flyover all at 6-inch resolution?

A: A 6-inch project would be better. Funding from the counties is an option we are considering – though many counties will have trouble finding any funding at all.

Q: There were problems with the 2005 buy-up, how are these addressed in the new program?

A: We consider three types of buy-up issues: budget timing, price, and delivery schedule. Budget timing is still an issue, but if we can build an on-going program, this issue will go away in a couple of years. It is our goal that the buy-up price should be less expensive than market price; though this may not be the case in today's economy. One idea we are considering is that counties who buy and share their own photos be reimbursed from the State for the State's share. The delivery schedule can be handled through better project management on our side and closer vendor cooperation.

Q: Will counties be allowed to share with cities and towns for their orthophotography buy-ups?

A: We do not anticipate that we can work with cities and towns for funding – due to the logistics. It would be appropriate (even desired) for cities to work with counties to help fund the effort.

## **National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) Updates and Projects**

**Phil Worrall, IGIC Executive Director**

Q: In updating the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), can we name streams that are currently unnamed?

A: The initial GNIS update is designed to ensure that all of the existing GNIS names are in the NHD prior to the local-resolution conversion and conflation process. During this process, there

is a methodology in place to capture and report any new and alternate names that are identified from local data sources. As each sub-basin is completed, these names will be submitted to the Indianan Board on Geographic Names and the GNIS for consideration as proposed changes and updates to the GNIS.

Q: Is the USGS contacting cities and counties for assistance with the NHD project?

A: The USGS will not, but Indiana's project team will use the GIS Inventory (Ramona) to contact local governments about any local data that may assist with this project.

## **Indiana Geographic Information Council**

### **Phil Worrall, IGIC Executive Director**

Q: What is a GIS Coordinator?

A: A GIS Coordinator is the go-to person in a local government for access to geospatial resources. In smaller cities, towns and counties the GIS Coordinator is often a department of one person, so they have to wear many (all) hats while providing GIS support and services in their jurisdiction.

Q: Would it be possible to compile ROI's (return on investment), both anecdotal and quantitative, on city/county GIS projects for making our case to local officials?

A: Anecdotal - IGIC would be happy to help local governments write up their GIS success stories and help them document their ROI. IGIC currently has almost 60 Success Stories available online in both .html and .pdf format at: [www.igic.org/realworld/index.html](http://www.igic.org/realworld/index.html).

A: Quantitative - IGIC's ROI methodology uses two different standard measures: "Aggregate Value ROI" and "Useage ROI." A description of the IGIC methodology can be found in the "34:1 Return on Investment" story beginning on page A3 of our 2008 IndianaMap Newspaper (see link below). Additionally, several different ROI methods are used by the geospatial community. Links for information on these various methods are provided below:

IGIC ROI Model: [www.igic.org/projects/indianamap/IndianaMapNews.pdf](http://www.igic.org/projects/indianamap/IndianaMapNews.pdf)

NSGIC Model: [www.nsgic.org/hottopics/return\\_on\\_investment.pdf](http://www.nsgic.org/hottopics/return_on_investment.pdf)

URISA Information: [www.urisa.org/search/node/ROI](http://www.urisa.org/search/node/ROI)

GITA ROI Book: [www.gita.org/gita-in-action/roi\\_workbook.asp](http://www.gita.org/gita-in-action/roi_workbook.asp)

Q: Is there a plan to do another Return on Investment study?

A: IGIC's original ROI study was funded by a \$50,000 2007 FGDC grant. We hope to qualify for a future grant to conduct a complete new ROI study. In lieu of new grant funding, IGIC will continue to work with our members and partners to collect and document new success stories and individual ROI statistics from across Indiana. We will make these new success stories available on our website, and we plan to publish them in a new publication in 2010.

Q: In terms of Return on Investment, how will the success of the Data Sharing Initiative be measured?

A: First and foremost by the initial county participation,; longer term by continued local government participation in the program. Second, if the technology and infrastructure for the ongoing harvesting of the local government data proves to be a mostly invisible process from the county side, and mostly an automated process on the state side, the process will be a success. Third, measuring the demand and use of the four harvested data layers will provide significant quantifiable ROI data.

Q: How is IGIC and this wealth of GIS data perceived and understood by the general public, and what can we do to help them take advantage of this information?

A: IGIC continues to look for ways to reach out to the public (non-GIS folks) to explain the power, value, and need for accurate and current geospatial data. Ongoing efforts by our Education and Outreach Committees and Conference Committee, and most recently efforts by our Legislative and Communications Committees are addressing this need.

Q: Will any of these presentations [from today] be posted, and will they be available in .pdf?

A: Yes, at [www.igic.org/forum](http://www.igic.org/forum).

Q: Any plans to bring the IGIC Conference to different regions of the state (Lafayette, Terre Haute, Muncie, Fort Wayne, South Bend)?

A: The 2009 and 2010 GIS Conferences are in Bloomington, and for 2011 the Conference Committee is looking at Muncie. Lafayette is under consideration for 2012. Additional suggestions are welcome.

Q: How many regional groups meet to discuss GIS on a regular basis (e.g., NE & NW Indiana)?

A: We are aware of two groups in northern Indiana: the Northwest Indiana User Group and the Northeast Indiana Geospatial Information Community. Information on both groups can be found at [www.igic.org/user%20groups/index.html](http://www.igic.org/user%20groups/index.html).

Q: Is there the possibility for IGIC to sponsor university or college chapters?

A: We would be interested in sponsoring IGIC Student Chapters. The two primary factors for a successful student chapter are 1.) An interested and motivated Academic Sponsor at the institution, and 2.) An interested group of GIS students at the institution to help lead the group. We would likely form a subcommittee or workgroup to spearhead the effort. Anyone interested in this please contact Phil Worrall at [pworrall@igic.org](mailto:pworrall@igic.org).

## City, Town and County Issues

### Phil Worrall, IGIC Executive Director and Jim Sparks, Indiana GIO

Q: Has anyone been able to construct and present an argument to your City regarding why the City should participate with the county to pay for data such as new orthophotography?

A: No, but we should! IGIC will look into preparing talking points for local government GIS Coordinators (both City and County) to have this discussion with their policy makers and elected officials. We understand the benefits of preparing these types of tools to help local GIS staff effectively communicate the value and funds needed to support local GIS data development. If you have already had this conversation with your elected officials we would love to hear your story. Also, anyone interested in helping prepare this document, please email Phil Worrall at IGIC [pworrall@igic.org](mailto:pworrall@igic.org).

IGIC has a number of presentations, flyers, and GIS success stories available to download and customize. They are generally intended for a non-specialist audience, and can be useful in talking with officials. They can be downloaded from [www.igic.org/training/flyers.html](http://www.igic.org/training/flyers.html) and [www.igic.org/training/kits.html](http://www.igic.org/training/kits.html).

Q: Our county commissioners would like to know who is using our GIS data and why.

A: Although under freedom of information laws we are not allowed to ask questions regarding why or how requestors are using public records, we do know the following: From conversations with FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security we know that disaster

preparedness, mitigation, and recovery efforts rely on local data. The Indiana State Police Computer Aided Dispatch program, and the Indiana Broadband Mapping Project are just two more recent examples of how local data are being used for statewide initiatives. We also have information on nearly 60 individual GIS Success Stories and our Annual GIS Awards online at [www.igic.org/awards/greatgismenu.html](http://www.igic.org/awards/greatgismenu.html), and we encourage all GIS coordinators to send us more!

Q: What problems/solutions have GIS groups had with State-mandated transition to certified tax and assessment software?

A: We have not heard of any problems, but this issue may not be specifically identified as an IGIC (GIS) issue. We would be very interested in hearing from local governments about any problems they have or are encountering using these certified assessment software packages with their GIS data and software, and their solutions. Please email information to Phil Worrall at [pworrall@igic.org](mailto:pworrall@igic.org).

## **Access to Data: Open Records Law, GIS Law, Charging for Data, etc.** **Jim Sparks, Indiana GIO**

Q: If we must provide our GIS data to the public, is view-only sufficient? If they want to download do we have to allow?

A: I think that our Access To Public Records Act ensure that a citizen can request and receive a copy of a public record, including GIS data. However this is a legal question and is best answered by a legal expert.

Q: How much can we charge for data according to the law and Public Access Councilor, and how do you determine the charge?

A: APRA (Access to Public Records Act) addresses this question as follows:

“(j) Except as provided in subsection (k), a public agency may charge a fee, uniform to all purchasers, for providing an electronic map that is based upon a reasonable percentage of the agency's direct cost of maintaining, upgrading, and enhancing the electronic map and for the direct cost of supplying the electronic map in the form requested by the purchaser. If the public agency is within a political subdivision having a fiscal body, the fee is subject to the approval of the fiscal body of the political subdivision.

(k) The fee charged by a public agency under subsection (j) to cover costs for maintaining, upgrading, and enhancing an electronic map may be waived by the public agency if the electronic map for which the fee is charged will be used for a noncommercial purpose, including the following:

- (1) Public agency program support.
- (2) Nonprofit activities.
- (3) Journalism.
- (4) Academic research.”

Q: For those who sell their GIS parcel data: How much do they charge? How often do they sell their data?

A: We know of no compilation of this information, although it would certainly be interesting reading.

Q: How does the PAC opinion about “not limiting down stream use” jibe with IC5-14-3 which says we can limit commercial use?

A: I believe that you are referring to IC 15-14-3(d) and (e), which say:

(d) Except as provided in subsection (e), a public agency that maintains or contracts for the maintenance of public records in an electronic data storage system shall make reasonable efforts to provide to a person making a request a copy of all disclosable data contained in the records on paper, disk, tape, drum, or any other method of electronic retrieval if the medium requested is compatible with the agency's data storage system. **This subsection does not apply to an electronic map.**

**(e) A state agency may adopt a rule under IC 4-22-2, and a political subdivision may enact an ordinance, prescribing the conditions under which a person who receives information on disk or tape under subsection (d) may or may not use the information for commercial purposes,** including to sell, advertise, or solicit the purchase of merchandise, goods, or services, or sell, loan, give away, or otherwise deliver the information obtained by the request to any other person for these purposes. Use of information received under subsection (d) in connection with the preparation or publication of news, for nonprofit activities, or for academic research is not prohibited. A person who uses information in a manner contrary to a rule or ordinance adopted under this subsection may be prohibited by the state agency or political subdivision from obtaining a copy or any further data under subsection (d).

The opinion from the Public Access Counselor addresses this specifically. The short answer is that section (c) does not apply to GIS data. Here is the long answer:

"You inquire whether a county ordinance prohibiting the sale of information for commercial purposes would apply where the State will be using it in the State Map, which does not restrict commercial use. You ask whether subsection 3(e) even applies to an electronic map since the information which is the subject of (e) is "information on disk or tape under subsection (d)," which does not include an electronic map. In my opinion, this is a straightforward issue: if the data you receive is an electronic map, subsection 3(e) would not apply. As you indicate, subsection 3(e) specifically addresses information received under subsection 3(d). Electronic maps are specifically excluded from subsection 3(e), and I find no analogous provision related to electronic maps. As such, if the information the State receives is information from an electronic map, the political subdivision may not limit the State's use or dissemination of the information."

Q: Will the State Legislature amend the two statues allowing local government to charge for data?

A: Only the state legislature can answer that question.