

NYS GIS State Agency Advisory Group
Meeting Report
at NYS Thruway Authority, Building 10
April 25, 2017

Welcome/Roundtable Discussion of Agency GIS Data Environments. The group introduced themselves, and discussed the various data formats and storage mechanisms that their agencies use for GIS Data.

- **Eric Herman – NYSTA:** Moved away from Oracle SDE a number of years ago, and primarily focus on file geodatabases (FGDBs), stored on a local server
- **Jason Baum – ITS (GPO):** Mostly use files in FGDBs on a network share at Data Center Use SDE to a small extent in server environments; Looking at OGC-compatible standards
- **Anyee Willows – NYSTA:** See Eric's notes; In addition, many end users use shapefiles stored on their own PCs
- **Dennis Wischman – DEC:** Lots of staff use shapefiles and FGDBs
- **Tim Daly – ITS (DEC):** Have Enterprise SDE running in Oracle for core data—this has been a good choice due to number of concurrent users (hundreds) & wide area configuration; Lots of users do use FGDBs and shapefiles; Some other agencies like DPS have stopped using SDE; DEC data currently on DEC servers, with plans to migrate to Data Center; Also noted that handheld GPS units use shapefiles
- **Christina Croll – ITS (OPRHP):** Primarily FGDBs; Also lots of GPS use, which exports to shapefiles and are often converted; SDE (running in SQL Server) is used for the CRIS application; All data is at the state Data Center
- **Rebecca Newell – DOS:** Planning & Development Office uses data on server at Data Center; Mostly use shapefiles; The Gateway data is hosted by Stone Environmental
- **Peter Lauridsen – DOS:** See Rebecca's notes
- **Melissa Albino Hegeman – DEC:** Natural Resources office almost always uses shapefiles
- **Gerald Farrell – OPWDD:** Use FGDBs on server local to the agency
- **Bob Gehrler – ITS (GPO):** See Jason's notes; Also noted that the office still creates shapefiles for parcels & boundaries due to a high demand from end users; In addition, QGIS is able to use shapefiles but not many other formats (keeping shapefile need)
- **Kate Kiyanitsa – ITS (GPO):** Get lots of data from locals in shapefiles
- **Jad Edlebi – AG:** Is an intern at AG, where they use FGDBs
- **Maurico Roma - AG:** Data is stored on an external drive and shared across network with students
- **Gwen LaSelva – DOH (Environmental Health):** MapInfo formats are still used by many at DOH; For Esri formats, mostly shapefiles are used for the ability to go between software platforms
- **Doug Heim – OTDA:** Shapefiles on local server are used to provide data to desktops with ArcMap
- **Nick Mezzadonna – OTDA:** See Doug's comments
- **Kevin Hunt – ITS (DOT):** *(Arrived after this portion of meeting)*
- **Jeff Langella – ITS (GPO):** *(Arrived after this portion of meeting)*

Tax Parcel and Civil Boundary Data Products. Bob discussed the new civil boundary layers, which are now available for download. The GIS Program Office (GPO) just released their most recent quarterly update. Bob was careful to point out that boundaries do change: Five villages were recently dissolved, dozens of annexations have occurred, data layers have been updated and added, names have changed, fields have been added, etc. Consequently, he reminded people to make sure they use current versions. His group is working to clean up boundary linework along streets as well as comparing the lines against parcel data.

Bob then announced the new web service that is now available in the ShareGIS environment. This replaces the muni boundaries service, which is very old and should no longer be used. Not only has the URL changed, but the new service is available as a feature service, allowing for far more flexibility by users.

In addition, Bob went on to note that the state's GIS website hosts a [list of web services](#) that various state agencies make available. He asked the group to make sure all links are accurate and up to date. Bob will compile any changes, and submit them all as a single ticket into the ITS system for web updates.

Kate then talked about the parcel data and its rich set of attributes. This data is based on joins from assessor data to the parcel outlines. Everything has been standardized into a single format. The GPO has done a good deal of categorization, included as value-added material. There were 65 attributes from the local assessors, and they have added a code to identify how the information was verified. Kate noted that a good deal of school district data was misidentified, so that is now included as a separate owner type. Road right-of-way polygons are also included for many municipalities. Recently, they have been cleaning up state-owned land categories and have received new datasets in from some agencies. Bob noted that although it is incomplete, and is not an official source, the GPO has the best collection of state-owned property that exists. The GPO is working with OGS (Owen Devine), since that agency has the responsibility to manage state owned parcels.

Parcel data is now on a SharePoint website for download by state agencies. 2016 data from ORPTS was just received last month and 48 counties will be uploaded within the month (about 14 this month, and more next month). The office will sync this with the counties' 2017 polygons, as soon as they become available.

The GPO is working on an agreement with Rockland County to procure access to their parcel data for state agencies. Suffolk and Putnam Counties are the only other two counties that are currently not allowing the GPO to share parcel data with state agencies. However, discussions continue. At last count, 18 counties are now willing to share their data with the public. Kate also noted that the point dataset has all the same attribute data as the parcels, and a web services for this data should be out soon.

Bob mentioned that the state's legislative districts (NY senate & assembly, and US Congress) are now publically available as web services (though not yet advertised). These are more up to date than the versions available for download. Representative names will be maintained regularly.

ShareGIS Phase 2. Jason gave an update of the ShareGIS project. He started by reviewing the history of GIS data coordination in the state, then moved on to note that the ShareGIS platform, to provide an enterprise GIS platform for access to data and geoprocessing services. Phase I is complete – having replaced a single server with three clustered ones, and consolidating GPO, NYSP & OEM environments. Phase II's focus is to build an enterprise class environment that is both modular and scalable. The GPO contracted AppGeo to develop the conceptual architectural design and describe the deliverables, a narrative, diagrams, fit/gap analysis, implementation plan, and risk assessment. Jason noted that this platform would eventually allow for restrictions to certain data sets, via specific log in credentials. A conversation followed, discussing desire for a software-as-a-service platform, which Jason made clear is outside of the scope of this project.

Open Forum/Projects of Note.

- Jeff noted that his group at the GPO is working with the ShareGIS Team to host a service to provide access to the DEMs. This would allow for access to contours, elevation analysis, and ability to limit the scope to specific areas. The elevation web service should eliminate a good deal of the need to download the large elevation data sets.
- Eric noted that the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) project that he is working on with ITS and NYSP has started to coalesce, and makes extensive use of many of the state's datasets (SAM address points, street network, parcel data, boundaries, etc.)
- The group briefly discussed GIS workstation recommended specifications. Eric relayed a message from Frank Winters that the GPO will be meeting with ITS Enterprise Procurement to discuss the need for a higher level PC specification for state GIS professionals. Bob noted that he would get further information about this, and report back to the group.
- Kevin noted that DOT is pursuing VDI for ArcGIS access for remote offices. Initially, they were having trouble with corruption of local file geodatabases. This turned out to be an issue related to anti-virus software.

Standardization of Maps for the Executive Chamber. Jason wrapped up the meeting with a presentation about formats and standardization of maps that the GPO has been providing for the Executive Chamber. He emphasized that it would be best for agencies to generate maps related to their own data. His office has very specific formats that they use, so that exported .png images can be inserted in PowerPoints. Transparency is set for specific colors, and text is often left off the maps, so that the Governor's press office can place it on the map the way they prefer. Even map points are typically just location indicators that the Chamber uses to place their own symbology. Jason has a document that he will share, which specifies the guidelines that they use. This includes colors from the state's Branding Guidelines. Rebecca noted that she has an Esri style file that she will share, that includes these colors. Dennis asked about standardizing symbols across the board for state maps. This came up during mapping that he was doing for the state's "Nifty 50" effort for outdoor access. Eric said he'd forward this request on to Frank Winters at the next bi-weekly GIO meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m. Eric noted that the next meeting would probably not be until September, due to typically low turn outs for summer meetings.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 12, 2017 from 9:30am-12:00pm at the NY State Thruway Authority Offices. If you have any ideas for topics or would like to provide a demonstration at this meeting, please let us know. Any questions or concerns about any of these issues can be sent to the Advisory Group Chair, Eric Herman at the NYS Thruway Authority (518) 471-5890, or eric.herman@thruway.ny.gov.