

# Geospatial Governance for Georgia: Important For a Common Operating Picture (COP)

## **Overview:**

Some nine million people live and work in Georgia and all are affected by the location of features around them such as property, broadband infrastructure, roads, hospitals, districts (schools/legislative/voting), boundaries (county/municipal), service areas, hazardous material sites, etc. By visually overlaying digital representations of these location features, decision-makers are able to determine patterns and detect important associations otherwise unnoticeable: key components to prudent managerial strategies.

## **Problem Statement:**

However, Georgia is not currently attempting to provide a Common Operating Picture (COP) through the development, management, publication and visualization of the state's location assets, discoverable and accessible by all. For lack of a statewide system, GEMA is developing a secure, first-responder COP. Worse, Georgia is facing data decay and has defunded a 14-year long repository of the assets that do exist (Georgia GIS Clearinghouse). Successful management of the state's location resources requires knowledge of geospatial technologies, data and a statewide framework, known as an *enterprise Geospatial Program*, which Georgia is currently lacking. In addition, Georgia ranks #6 in fastest-growing firms, but #23 in base of high-tech professionals and #35 in workforce education (e.g., Georgia knows how to grow companies, but is not training the relevant workforce in the high-growth, high-demand Information Sector, which includes geospatial information).<sup>1</sup>

## **Proposed Solution:**

Data governance is central to data management success, and location is the one common link between dissimilar data, organizations and governmental programs.<sup>2</sup> A statewide Geospatial Program consisting of an Advisory Council and a full-time Geographic Information Officer (GIO), would serve as the umbrella for many essential enterprise components currently needed to integrate infrastructure, assets, educational pathways and government services in Georgia, including but not limited to the following:

- Strategically manage the state's infrastructure under one COP, identify stewards of its assets and facilitate data accessibility, flexibility and reuse across lines of business
- Consolidate purchasing, contracting and licensing of geospatial infrastructure (software, hardware, services)
- Eliminate duplication of cost/effort in data acquisition
- Generate information to support decision-makers and achieve state objectives
- Maximize stimulus funding for Georgia via fact-based reporting and the visualization of "need"
- Develop critical statewide geospatial databases not currently available for Georgia, including land parcels, water supplies, addresses, utilities, high-resolution elevation, inland bathymetry and many others

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<sup>1</sup> Kauffman Foundation. "State New Economy Index." Nov 2008

<sup>2</sup> National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC), "Criteria for Federal Coordination of Geographic Information Technology – A State Perspective." May 2008: [http://www.nsgic.org/resources/federal\\_coordination\\_factors\\_may2008.pdf](http://www.nsgic.org/resources/federal_coordination_factors_may2008.pdf)