



ITPC POLICY NO. 1

ITPC Policy: Statewide Geographic Information System (GIS)

1.0 Purpose: To provide a more efficient and effective framework for the planning, budgeting, acquisition and utilization of all State GIS resources.

2.0 Necessity: Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Technology is rapidly spreading through multiple agencies of Georgia state government. Although the state spends millions of dollars each year on the acquisition of new spatial data, it is almost impossible for state agencies to share GIS data among themselves; resulting in the costly, uncoordinated collection of redundant data. Each agency is forced to build a full set of statewide databases, since access to other agencies' databases is costly, time-consuming, and very slow.

Exchange of spatial data is made yet more difficult since each agency creates its own internal standards for data formats and data documentation. At the same time, the GIS units of state agencies are being overwhelmed by GIS data requests from local, state, and federal governments, as well as public utilities and private businesses. Some of these requests can be met, but each GIS unit must necessarily give higher priority to the internal mandates of its agency than to requests from outside organizations.

The success of coordinated, statewide GIS policy and planning will depend on the broadest possible participation of all agencies which are currently conducting GIS activities, all agencies which are considering future GIS implementation and other interested parties in both the public and private sectors.

3.0 Statements of Policy

3.1 The Information Technology Policy Council (ITPC) appoint a statewide Geographic Information System Coordinating Committee (GISCC). The GISCC will be composed of 16 members who will serve at the pleasure of the ITPC. Nine members shall represent State agencies, three shall represent local/regional authorities, two shall represent the private sector, and two shall represent GIS professional associations. This organization will be established and have the same standing as other ITPC committees.

The GISCC will coordinate investments in the State's data development and technology and coordinate the development of Georgia's spatial data infrastructure in a way that leverages the efforts of all levels of government and key partners in the private sector. The GISCC will have the following duties and responsibilities:

3.1.1 Provide advice to the ITPC on statewide GIS policy, standards, and financial issues;

3.1.2 Report to the ITPC regarding major GIS projects within the State and to the extent to which they are developed within the State's spatial data framework;

3.1.3 Develop a statewide business plan to identify policy issues and to develop management plans to coordinate these GIS activities.

3.1.4 Coordinate state agencies' implementation of GIS information technology to reduce duplication of effort.

3.2 The State of Georgia has established a State Geographic Information System (GIS) Data Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse will provide an effective means for state agencies to share one another's GIS data and function as a primary data distribution mechanism for providing Georgia's GIS data to the public. The Clearinghouse will have the following duties and responsibilities:

3.2.1 Document, collect, format and publish GIS information for Georgia

3.2.2 Develop tools to facilitate the sharing of GIS data and information

3.2.3 Assist in the coordinated acquisition of new statewide GIS data

3.2.4 Promote the availability of GIS data.

The Clearinghouse should be as autonomous as possible and serve the interests of the State of Georgia and its GIS needs. The Clearinghouse will be administratively and budgetarily attached to the ITPC.

3.3 The State of Georgia will collaboratively develop a set of commonly used statewide GIS databases needed by multiple agencies to building the "Georgia Spatial Data Infrastructure" (GSPDI). Data themes and priorities will be recommended by the GISCC to the ITPC. The ITPC will coordinate annual funding for the construction and maintenance of the GSPDI. Funds earmarked for the GSPDI may be expended by the State alone, by the State acting in partnership with federal agencies, regional/local authorities or the private sector.

4.0 Impacts: There are many types of GIS data which are too expensive for any one agency to acquire (such as a statewide, high-accuracy base map), but could be affordable through a multi-agency effort. In addition, many other projects lend themselves to cross-agency coordination and joint funding such as contracts for land use satellite photography, mapping contracts, etc.

The State GIS Clearinghouse will provide a one-stop customer service center for GIS information. This facility is established to reduce duplication of effort, in the collection and distribution of expensive digital spatial data and foster cooperation among the major GIS organizations in the State.

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