Law and the Geoweb Workshop

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The context of local agency GIS operations

- Likely 1,000 county GIS operations in the U.S. (potential of 3,000 plus)
- Likely 2,500 – 5,000 municipal GIS operations in the U.S (potential of 25,000)
- Hundreds of regional agency GIS operations
- Thousands of utility district GIS operations
- NONE OF THESE GIS OPERATIONS HAVE ENOUGH MONEY
- ALL OF THESE GIS OPERATIONS ARE LIKELY FACING BUDGET LIMITATIONS
The context of local agency GIS operations

- GIS data development and maintenance to meet local agency business needs is complex, expensive, and provides no direct benefit in and of itself.

- GIS business applications data needs provide the ROI and drive data development and maintenance.
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King County GIS

- 475 maintained data layers
- 1,200 data layers obtained from other regional agencies via GIS Data sharing program
- Other than imagery, there is little viable market provided GIS data that meets our municipal business needs
Local government limitations relative to the Geoweb

- Capability levels of local agency GIS operations vary greatly
- Process maturity levels of local agency GIS operations vary greatly and the concept of maturity is poorly understood
Local government limitations relative to the Geoweb

- The ROI from local agency GIS is assumed – but needs to be proven:
  - Spatial Information in the New Zealand Economy, LINZ 2009, ACIL Tasman
  - King County GIS ROI Study via UW CBA Center
  - Twin Cities, Metro GIS ROI Study
  - Multnomah County GIS Application ROI Study
Local government limitations relative to the Geoweb

- Compliance with state and local jurisdiction legal & policy framework for GIS data sharing (and these vary in each jurisdiction)

- Transactional nature of most data sharing
Local government imperatives relative to the Geoweb

- Meet critical local agency Geoweb data business needs
- Minimize liability
- Pay for data development
- Pay for data maintenance
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Pressures on local government GIS operations

- Provide data for free
- Customize data for outside users
- Sign industry data access agreement, rather than local agency licenses
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Local government options

- Copyright
- State law limitations on cost recovery
- Licensing
- Liability issues
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The failure of the market to build the Geoweb

- Limitations of crowd sourced data to meet government agency needs
- Inability of the market to develop Geoweb data for its own needs
- Unwillingness of the market to develop Geoweb data to meet local agency business needs
- Possible exceptions: Environmental Data Resources, marketing demographics data providers, others?
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Possible local agency vision for GIS data sharing

- Prove ROI of implementing local agency GIS

- Prove regional ROI from making local agency GIS data freely available for business, academic, and citizen use

- Treat GIS data as a utility - developed, maintained, and managed by entrepreneurial multi-jurisdictional consortia (parallel with development of electric utilities from 125 years ago)

- Private industry – public agency GIS data sharing via creative commons
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Possible ways forward

- Model state data sharing laws
- Develop model local agency data license
- Voluntary private industry revenue sharing
- Local open data access web portals
- Incentive federal financial support for core data posted to the NSDI
Possible ways forward

- Proposed URISA GIS Capability Maturity Model:
  - Designed to measure capability and support statewide GIS assessments and COGO’s proposed Geospatial Technology Report Card for the Nation
  - Designed to increase ROI by focusing on attention on process maturity
  - URISA focus on local agency GIS ROI study & process
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What makes me lose sleep at night

- Uninformed decision makers assuming that local agency GIS data is easier to develop and maintain than it is

- Public agency GIS data slipping into the control of private industry via copyright law

- Crowd-sourced data as an alternative to critical framework municipal data layers

- Erosion of local agency GIS funding support as municipal decision makers assume that the market (or the mob) can step in and supply and maintain useful data
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