Indiana Geographic Information Office Hits 100% with Data Sharing Project

The Marshall County Board of Commissioners voted in early April to become the last of ninety-two Indiana Counties to share four critical geospatial data sets with the Indiana Geographic Information Office. This exceptional level of County-State cooperation, and the important statewide data created by the project, validates the concept of a local-to-state-to-national approach to building and maintaining a National Map. Geographic Information System (GIS) technology and data generally, and these four county level data sets in particular, support public safety and economic development, and provide geographic context for a myriad of government policy decisions about everything from natural resources to voting precincts. Beginning in 2008, the Indiana Geographic Office joined with other GIS partners to develop, integrate, and publish the following four statewide geographic data layers using existing county data:

- Land Parcels

- Address Points (that connect a street address with a geographic coordinate)

- Street Centerlines (with street name and address ranges)

- Local Administrative Boundaries (such as school and election districts)

With the addition of Marshall County, Indiana has complete statewide coverage of these data, thereby increasing the value and usefulness for all Indiana citizens.

"I love working with Hoosiers!" said Jim Sparks, Indiana's Geographic Information Officer, a position created by state statute in 2007 and responsible for coordinating GIS across all levels of government. "One-hundred percent voluntary participation in this important County-State project is a testament to our active and engaged Indiana GIS community. We are all working collaboratively to improve the quality of life for Hoosiers by supporting economic development, public safety, transportation, and government and private sector efficiency through the availability of these critical data."

As a result of the data sharing project, these layers are already being used by the Indiana State Police, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Natural Resources, and the Secretary of State's office, as well as colleges, universities, the private sector, and the counties from which the data originated.

Public safety was a key incentive for many of the counties to participate in the statewide project. David Vice, Executive Director of the Indiana Integrated Public Safety Commission remarked, "When agencies share data, lives are saved and public offices become more efficient.

Sharing data encourages collaboration among agencies, provides for informed decision-making and reduces redundancy of data production. Further, planning and policy groups become better informed, particularly in terms of emergency calls and disaster response. We can be proud that all 92 counties are now sharing their map data, a major milestone that will benefit all Indiana taxpayers."

These data layers, along with other geographic information are freely available to the public from the IndianaMap (www.IndianaMap.org), a web-based data portal, viewer, and download tool which has demonstrated a 34 to 1 return on investment (http://www.igic.org/projects/indianamap/IndianaMapNews.pdf). Given that 80% or more of government data has a geographic component, it is not surprising that Indiana government agencies, universities, and private sector companies have received significant benefit from the 240-plus layers of publicly available, highly accurate, and current geospatial information offered for viewing and download at the IndianaMap. The data contributed by all 92 Indiana counties adds even more value to the IndianaMap.

The Indiana Geographic Information Office is located within the Indiana Office of Technology and was created by state statute in 2007 to facilitate GIS data cooperation between units of the federal, state, and local governments; integrate GIS data and framework data into a statewide base map; develop and maintain statewide framework data layers; provide public access to GIS data and framework data in locations throughout Indiana; and serve as Geographic Information Officer for state agencies.

The GIS Office contributes to the quality of Indiana as a place to live and work by cultivating statewide geographic information resources (relationships, data and technology) so that individuals and organizations across the state have suitable access to accurate and relevant geographic information and technology.

www.in.gov/gis

Jim Sparks
Indiana Geographic Information Officer
Indiana Office of Technology
100 North Senate Ave.
N551 Government Center North
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Office: (317) 234-5889
gio@iot.in.gov