

Center for GIS at Towson University

8000 York Road | 7801 York Road Building, Suite 260 | Towson, Maryland 21252
v.410.704.3887 | f.410.704.3888 | cgis@towson.edu | <http://www.towson.edu/cgis>

Grantor

United States Geological
Survey
National Spatial Data
Infrastructure
Federal Geographic Data
Committee

Date

March 2006 through
March 2007



GIS Coordination in Maryland

National Spatial Data Infrastructure

Future Directions Fifty States Initiative

Building an Effective Statewide Spatial Data Infrastructure

A partnership between the Center for GIS at Towson University (CGIS) and the Maryland State Geographic Information Committee (MSGIC) was awarded a grant in 2006 to develop strategic and business plans for GIS coordination in Maryland. The grant was awarded by the U.S. Geological Survey through the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) cooperative agreement program, whose mission is to help and encourage all levels of government, the private and non-profit sectors, and the academic community share geospatial data. The grant gave Maryland the timely opportunity to define the framework of a specific plan that suits all of Maryland's GIS stakeholders and also represents a significant cost saving.

Through a year-long process of stakeholder- and consensus-building, plans were drafted to guide Maryland toward creating an effective spatial data infrastructure. Major recommendations included establishing a state-funded, full-time Geographic Information Officer position, and creating a GIS Coordinating Council that includes representative membership from stakeholders in state, local, academic, and private sectors.

Besides contributing to NSDI's national data sharing mission, statewide GIS coordination benefits citizens by allowing Maryland's leadership to assess and communicate government program performance results, decrease unnecessary redundancies, leverage limited resources to their full potential, improve emergency preparedness and regional homeland security, facilitate land use planning, and enhance Chesapeake Bay restoration and land preservation work.

