

NYS GIS Association, Regional Committee Meeting: May 5th, 2021

Attendees

Sheri Norton
Frank Winters
Elisabeth DeGironimo
Jason Baum
Doug Schuetz
Alan Leidner

Notes

The Regional Committee continues to look for new priorities now that the COVID pandemic is waning. In the last Regional meeting Alan presented underground infrastructure mapping as a possibility. This week Frank Winters, reported on a number of State and NSGIC initiatives that also might also be candidates for a Regional focus.

Frank Winters discussed three areas in which he is currently engaged:

- **Broadband Mapping Redux:** The last broadband mapping project grant ended 7 years ago and so has seen modest progress since then. New needs include COVID related demands for telework, telemedicine, and home schooling. Plus, the proliferation of IoT and sensors are leading to greater bandwidth demands. Also, schools require greater bandwidth. There is now a move to initiate a new broadband mapping program that would be tied into new infrastructure development programs at the Federal level. The FCC is working on this. New NYS legislation gives responsibility to map broadband availability to the NYS Department of Public Services. The legislation compels broadband providers to provide data and state agencies to contribute data as needed. There will be a clear role for State and Regional GIS support and collaboration should this project be funded.
- **Authoritative Data for Wayfinding Applications:** Automatic wayfinding has changed the traffic safety landscape. Some drivers are paying more attention to the screen and less to what is happening on the road. This has led to among other things trucks striking overpasses. Of 618 recorded overpass strikes last year, 511 could be tied to inappropriate use of wayfinding. There is a push to build a national, authoritative addressing and transportation geodatabase to include overpass clearance heights, and real time work zone and exit information. In the past wayfinding app vendors including Google used to scrape State and Local databases. Now they use their own imagery which is more attractive (most government imagery is captured at an ugly time of year before leaf-on.) but not as accurate. There is interest (TomTom) in a trucker module. The hope is to reduce accidents, injuries and fatalities.
- **Lift America Act:** The proposed Federal act entitled Leading Infrastructure for Tomorrow's America Act (LIFT America Act) is proposing \$15B to support Next Gen 911

implementation. There is concern that an inappropriately high portion of this money, if allocated, would go for physical infrastructure while marginalizing the need for improved address data. GIS organizations are actively promoting a more even-handed expenditure of this money by requesting modified language expanding the acceptable standard referenced to include those related to more than just the physical network infrastructure.

Discussion then turned to COVID. It appears from information reported on public websites that vaccine data is not being geocoded, but only captured by zip code, repeating earlier missed opportunities to show data at a fine enough resolution to understand localized differences. There is a recognition that it will require more work to improve the geocoding of patient location information – with necessary privacy protections, of course. More precise data on those vaccinated, aggregated to census tracts, would help to target vaccine resistance neighborhoods for more persistent outreach.