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Rethinking GIS for Local Government

For cities and counties, implementing GIS just got easier.

Governments have demonstrated the power of GIS technology for many years, and now even more value has been added to help public-sector agencies extend their reach with ArcGIS® for Local Government. ArcGIS for Local Government consists of a set of tools, application templates, and resources that are helping government agencies rethink how they extend GIS. Part of a solution initiative at Esri, these maps, applications, workflows, and other resources are available today to be customized and used for numerous departmental functions. Local agencies can now implement applications that enhance their existing GIS immediately and more easily than ever. Many are seizing this opportunity to create more efficient government, improve workflows, increase citizen engagement, and generate productivity gains.

More than 60 maps and applications are available, and more are on the way. There are customizable applications for service requests from citizens, public comment on land use, emergency management, property taxes, and numerous other local government activities. Configurable application templates are discipline specific for areas such as land records, public safety, water utilities, public works, elections, general government, and planning and development.

Basemaps—ready-to-use maps loaded with content—give local governments a solid foundation on which they can build their own maps. Imagery and road data, demographics, topographic information, and other features, are also available—and the list of tools continues to grow.

Ready to Go

ArcGIS for Local Government is a ready-to-go set of practices and resources that enable local governments to fully utilize GIS quickly and easily—potentially saving months of development work for cash- and time-strapped agencies. The maps and applications are organized as a set of modules that can be downloaded and configured individually. They can be localized and customized, and they come with ongoing support and development from Esri. And everything's built on the Local Government Information Model—GIS datasets, web services, and maps that work across numerous departments, making collaboration and sharing easy.

ArcGIS for Local Government is focused on customer success, helping to provide better services to Esri customers and the public. It aligns perfectly with five key areas of government activity: data creation, planning and analysis, field mobility, operational awareness, and citizen engagement. The application templates, resources, and tools available also integrate with ArcGIS™ Online, a popular mapping platform that enables the sharing of maps, applications, and geospatial data.

In addition to creating ArcGIS for Local Government, Esri offers several ways to implement these tools and resources. Organizations can customize the applications themselves, of course; or, they can also get assistance from a valuable network of experts, Esri partners and consultants, and Esri Professional Services.

However it's extended, ArcGIS for Local Government will make an immediate impact—and it couldn't be easier.



Charting a New Course

New map services increase efficiency, productivity, and collaboration.

Baltimore, Maryland's award-winning website has a View Maps button on its home page, attesting to the city's belief in the power of maps. Now more than ever, the city is leveraging GIS to provide better service for both citizens and its own agencies.

Many of the city's maps are created with Esri's ArcGIS for Local Government. With the tools included in ArcGIS for Local Government, the city makes it easy for citizens to find polling places and comment on its rezoning initiative. Baltimore also uses the Local Government tools to help its agencies respond to snowy weather conditions and manage public safety responses.

The maps and applications from Esri have made a big difference for the city's Enterprise Geographic Information Services (EGIS) division, which has a relatively small staff and limited funding. "It's been working out very well," said Brad Chranko, GIS systems manager for the city. "It has allowed us more time to focus on our data integrity, and it provides our constituents easy and straightforward ways to work with our data. All that we have created from ArcGIS for Local Government has been very well

received by city agencies and by the public. As a result, they are wanting more of it."

Great Results

The Local Government tools have allowed the city to rethink how it uses GIS. "It provides analytical capabilities of GIS data to a wider range of people," Chranko said. "When we offer these focused and easy-to-use applications, agencies have less need to worry about the technical side of GIS."

The city has found the Local Government templates to be very helpful. "We usually start with a template and then modify it to better suit our needs," said Chranko. "We are especially proud of our Community Topographic Basemap, where we have added painstaking detail to many of the city's special features like parks and campuses. It also provides all GIS users in the city a common map to start with, which has gone a long way in developing unity among users."

A common information model helps too. "Having a one-model approach will increase cross-agency collaboration and sharing. It adds meat to the 'enterprise' part of EGIS," said Chranko.

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— Brad Chranko, GIS systems manager, Baltimore

Citizens have responded well. The Polling Place application has seen significant use by residents looking for voting locations and other election information. The Public Comment application has been popular with citizens as they share their views on the citywide rezoning initiative. "It provides the public with an alternative way to voice their opinions on contentious issues such as rezoning. Such comments probably wouldn't be captured in the traditional community meeting approach," Chranko said.

Baltimore plans to expand its use of ArcGIS for Local Government in the future, but it's already become a part of everyday life for the city. "I believe it really enhances everything we do," Chranko said.

Transformation via GIS

Thanks to the latest tools, GIS plays a larger role in county government.

Sussex County, New Jersey, is providing better services, both internally and externally, thanks to Esri's ArcGIS for Local Government. Its new tools are being leveraged by the county's Office of Geographic Information Systems to create better efficiency, smoother workflows, and greater productivity for county government. The office has embedded GIS into agencies' workflows, speeding up the sharing of information. The GIS office is also helping agencies manage their own data so they will have quicker access to it.

ArcGIS for Local Government is also helping the GIS office transform itself into a more robust service provider. Previously, individual agencies had to rely on the GIS office for printed maps and data. "Now we provide dynamic, online maps where the information is not managed by the Office of GIS but it's managed by the business unit that deals with it," said David Kunz, GIS manager for Sussex County. "They (agencies) manage their information, and we're integrating it and providing it as a tool back to them. And that turns into

increased efficiencies; more outreach to the public; more transparency in government; and better, faster decisions."

Engineering, health, elections, and other departments now have GIS data they can access at any time. Consequently, agencies can work more quickly, and the GIS office can spend less time printing maps and more time providing data services and applications to help agencies achieve their goals. "It's moving us more toward being part of core government," said Kunz.

Process Improvements

With the easy-to-use templates, applications, and other tools from ArcGIS for Local Government, the county has more ways to serve the public and improve its processes. "Now we can quickly and easily roll out these template applications that are customizable, to provide this information out to the public or the individual business units," said Kunz. "We couldn't have done that before. We would have had to develop all that in-house, and that takes time."

With the tools in place, there have been many benefits. "We've seen improvement

in getting our information out to the public, promoting transparency in government, and providing tools for county and local government to be more efficient," said Kunz.

With the Local Government tools, the county provides citizens with an application for finding polling places. There's also an application for finding government services such as libraries, police stations, and post offices. And the Local Government Information Model—a common database used by several agencies—creates greater efficiency. "Our county executives have found the Local Government Information Model and the web templates to be very beneficial for providing real-time information to the public as well as elected officials," noted Kunz.

ArcGIS for Local Government is helping Sussex County expand its use of GIS further across the enterprise. Subsequently, the GIS office is better able to help other agencies. "We've turned it all around," Kunz said. "We've provided them with GIS tools, and embedded the tools into their individual workflows, so they're managing their data. That's something that hadn't really happened before."





Get Started with ArcGIS for Local Government

To support evolving government needs, Esri created ArcGIS for Local Government—a solutions approach to improving government processes. ArcGIS for Local Government helps public-sector agencies with data collection, planning and analytics,

field work force support, operational efficiency and awareness, and citizen engagement. It provides a platform for jump-starting new GIS projects with map templates, applications, and more. Esri provides the resources to get things started. With Esri's core offerings and

ArcGIS for Local Government, public-sector agencies can increase efficiency, productivity, and citizen engagement. Whether it's for public works, planning and development, or numerous other activities, ArcGIS for Local Government can help.



For more information and resources on ArcGIS for Local Government, please visit esri.com/govtechag.



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