

# The People's Choice GIS Awards

Contests in which the fans determine the outcome—*American Idol* and *Dancing with the Stars*—are familiar. GIS has its own version: the User Software Applications Fair.

This contest, held during the Esri International User Conference, gives attendees the opportunity to test, evaluate, and vote for applications developed by their peers. This year's top three vote getters in each of the four categories were announced as the winners by Esri president Jack Dangermond during the conference closing session on July 27.

As GIS applications have moved from the desktop to other platforms, the contest has evolved and now includes categories for web-based applications delivered via web browser; mobile GIS applications developed for Android, iOS (iPad or iPhone), Windows Phone, ArcGIS Mobile, or ArcPad; multimedia maps (previously known as the Virtual Map Gallery), which encompasses animations, CD/DVD-ROM, and other multimedia presentations displaying the results of GIS analysis; and desktop GIS applications (either ArcGIS for Desktop or ArcGIS Engine) developed using Visual Basic for Applications (VBA), ArcObjects SDK (Java, C++, or .NET), or Python.

The City of Johns Creek, Georgia, staff members found the voting results this year especially gratifying. They walked off with not just one but two awards: a second place in the web-based GIS competition and a second place in the multimedia map category.

Johns Creek GIS manager Nicholas O'Day, citizen responder Kim Lavender, and web manager Sue Pearlman created a web-based roadwork map that helps commuters by flagging the location, duration, and nature of road repairs and their likely impacts on travel times.

GIS analyst Liz Parrish and O'Day developed the Fire Department Interactive Map Book, the second place winner in the multimedia map category. The map book is downloaded to fire truck computers and provides information on specific addresses and nearby buildings, the location of fire hydrants, and topography. Because it is stored

locally, it is not dependent on connectivity to the Internet and can be transferred to other computers or mobile devices.

Johns Creek, with a population of 76,000, is staffed by just two GIS professionals, O'Day and Parrish, who receive assistance with specific projects from other city staff. However, O'Day felt it was important to participate in the software applications fair for two reasons: "It validated all the work we do, and it brought us some recognition from average citizens," said O'Day. He

sees it as a way to give GIS more visibility to citizens and encourage them to use the city's many web applications to answer their questions.

Although the contest was "a lot of work," he characterized it as a fun experience. "We are definitely going to do it next year."

For the complete list of 2012 Software Applications Fair winners, go to [esri.com/events/user-conference/participate/user-app-fair-results.html](http://esri.com/events/user-conference/participate/user-app-fair-results.html).

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