

Policy Name: GIS Data Sharing

Effective: 07/17/1997

1.0 Purpose and Benefits of the Policy

Computerized geographic data that is created, collected, processed, disseminated, and stored by public agencies in New York State is a valuable information resource. This policy will facilitate the sharing of Geographic Information System (GIS) data and improve access to computerized geographic data across all levels of government.

This policy encourages public agencies to share in the creation, use, and maintenance of GIS datasets at the least possible cost, while providing citizens, the media, and other data users easy access to this resource. In addition, it is designed to:

- reduce costs and duplication of effort;
- increase awareness of the availability of existing datasets;
- ensure the completeness and accuracy of information describing the datasets (metadata);
- encourage adherence to data standards;
- improve the quality of data;
- ensure consistent and enhanced access to data;
- provide public access to information in accordance with FOIL; and
- facilitate coordination of GIS data gathering, maintenance, and sharing among State, Regional, County, and Local Agency users.

2.0 Enterprise IT Policy Statement

Section 2 of Executive Order No. 117 provides the State Chief Information Officer, who also serves as director of the NYS Office for Technology, the authority to oversee, direct and coordinate the

establishment of information technology policies, protocols and standards for State government, including hardware, software, security and business re-engineering. Details regarding this authority can be found in NYS CIO/OFT Policy [NYS-P08-002, Authority to Establish State Enterprise Information \(IT\) Policy, Standards and Guidelines](#).

3.0 Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all “State government entities,” as defined in NYS Executive Order 117.

4.0 Policy Statement

State agencies should share GIS data in a consistent and appropriate manner with other State and Federal agencies, and County, Regional, and Local Agencies at little or no cost. Local Governments are encouraged to participate in order to minimize their costs. To accomplish this, the following provisions shall apply:

4.1 Establishment of a NYS GIS Data Sharing Cooperative

The GIS Coordinating Body, established in Technology Policy 96-18 and serving as a Standing Subcommittee of the Governor's Task Force on Information Resource Management, will establish and administer the "New York State GIS Data Sharing Cooperative." This body will provide an organized mechanism for sharing GIS data across the State and will allow members to easily obtain computerized data from other members under a standardized data sharing agreement. State agencies are required to participate in the Cooperative and County, Regional, and Local Governments are encouraged to join the Cooperative.

4.2 Creation of Statewide Standards

State agencies shall follow Standards for GIS data and metadata as adopted by the GIS Coordinating Body. These standards, which are currently under development, will guide the collection and maintenance of newly developed datasets and provide direction for the revision and updating of existing datasets.

4.3 Designation of the “Primary Custodians” (Owners) of GIS Data

Agencies that create, develop or own GIS datasets will be considered the primary custodians of those datasets. Where ownership is unclear, the GIS Coordinating Body will determine the primary custodian. Secondary custodians, or agencies in possession of a GIS dataset acquired from the primary custodian, shall refer agencies wishing to acquire datasets to the primary custodian of those datasets for distribution. Should an entity request a dataset under the Freedom of Information Law, secondary custodians should notify the requestor of the primary custodian. In doing so, they should encourage the requestor to obtain the dataset from the primary custodian to insure that they receive the latest information. Should the requestor still wish to receive the dataset from the secondary custodian, the secondary custodian should respond in accordance with the statute.

4.4 Making GIS Data Available

State agencies shall make their GIS computerized data available in digital format to other State, Local and Federal agencies as permitted by statute. Furthermore, agencies are expected to develop efficient methods for the distribution of this data using electronic dissemination to the extent possible.

4.5 Maintenance of GIS Data

Primary custodians have the responsibility for ensuring sound management of computerized GIS data as to its form, content, and integrity. Secondary custodians are required to report any errors to the primary custodian. In the event that a secondary custodian updates the data contained in the data set, it must provide that information to the primary custodian who may choose to include it in its original dataset.

4.6 Submission to the GIS Clearinghouse

State agencies shall contribute GIS metadata to the New York State GIS Clearinghouse after September 1, 1997. Agencies will be expected to complete this task as soon as possible thereafter and continue to update and add new metadata in a timely manner. Local Government Agencies and others are encouraged to provide their metadata to the Clearinghouse to facilitate data sharing. All agencies are encouraged to contribute information on GIS data development and other GIS activities.

4.7 Pricing of Shared GIS Data

State Agencies are encouraged to make computerized GIS data available to all government agencies at no cost. When charges must be imposed, in no case shall they exceed the actual cost of fulfilling the request.

4.8 Requests Which Involve Programming

The Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) does not require an agency to create a record, therefore, when an agency requests services which require programming of the primary custodian's data, fulfilling these requests is at the option of the primary custodian.

4.9 Schedule

In order to insure a smooth implementation of the Technology Policy, agencies are being asked to adhere to the following implementation schedule:

September 1997

State agencies are asked to sign the NYS Cooperative Data Sharing Agreement in September 1997. A copy of this will be distributed by the Task Force in August. Agencies should plan to fully implement GIS data sharing with other State Agencies by January 1998. State Agencies should begin forwarding their GIS Metadata to the GIS Clearinghouse in September 1997.

January 1998

State Agencies will begin sharing their GIS data with Local Governments that sign the NYS Cooperative Data Sharing Agreement. Full implementation is scheduled for June 1998.

Should you have any questions, please contact the Task Force at (518) 473-5622 or via **E-mail**.