



"Humanity is coalescing. It is reconstituting the world, ... No one knows how many groups and organizations are working on the most salient issues of our day: climate change, poverty, deforestation, peace, water, hunger, conservation, human rights, and mores. This is the largest movement the world has ever seen. Rather than control, it seeks connection."
 — Paul Hawken, University of Portland

GIS is more than a revolutionary technology. It is more than an analytical tool for making our government work. It's more than a new tool for implementing public policy. It just might be the linchpin of a powerful new movement. I personally believe that this movement understands that urgent progress—the sort of progress that our world needs today—depends on a strengthening of our connections to one another. It depends on a stronger and clearer connection between our hopes and our responsibilities; a stronger and more affirming connection between the actions of this generation and the lives of the next generation.

Those of us who believe in the progressive power of GIS believe that in using The Map—in using Smart Maps—to strengthen our connections to one another, we have the potential to change the course of a city's history, a country's history—perhaps even our planet's history—parcel-by-parcel, neighborhood-by-neighborhood, and most importantly, neighbor-by-neighbor.

I'd like to share with you just a few examples from the State of Maryland how we try to strengthen these connections through CitiStat, BayStat, StateStat, and RecoveryStat.

As I do so, I'd like you to consider why is it that in the course—and usually in the beginning—of any government demonstration of GIS capability, one citizen in the crowd will inevitably give voice to the thoughts of many, by asking the question: "Can you show me my house?"

The principles and strategies underpinning our StateStat model in Maryland—setting goals, measuring our progress, broadly sharing information rather than hoarding it—are, essentially, all about connections.

These were the ideas that inspired Bill Bratten and Jack Maple in the mid-1990s in New York City to create ComStat to dramatically reduce crime, improve public safety, and give New York, the Big Apple, a better future. Connecting police and crime deterrent assets to where the crime was actually happening.

And it's the same process, the same ideas that have inspired us in the City of Baltimore to borrow New York's ComStat tenets and create CitiStat. Not just to manage policing, but to manage everything throughout our city government with timely, accurate information shared by all.

In other words, it's about rapid deployment of resources to drive progress in the right direction. And, of course, it's about The Map. Smart Maps, and GIS as the central managing tool. A crime map, for example, doesn't know—or care—whether a neighborhood is black or white, whether a neighborhood is rich or poor. It tells us where the crime is happening and where we should, therefore, deploy our resources in order to suppress crime and make our city a safer place.

By mapping the most dangerous areas in the City of Baltimore and targeting resources to these most crime-challenged area, block by block, street by street, we were able to achieve,

over a relatively short period of time, a 40 percent reduction in violent crime.

We're also using Smart Maps to drive our progress in public safety. Last year we achieved our second biggest reduction in homicides since 1985.

On a more basic, less life-and-death level, we use StateStat and Smart Maps to decrease wait times, for example, at the Motor Vehicle Administration. In July 2007, Marylanders had to wait in line for 61 minutes to get a driving license; in April of this year, the waiting period was down to 30 minutes.

Another important goal for our Administration is to increase transit ridership. Again, we use maps to monitor this effort as well as the effect increased ridership is likely to have on decreasing air pollution and gas consumption.

Land conservation is a major priority for Maryland, and so it's not surprising that we would have a GreenPrint map. GreenPrint is part of the Maryland iMap which ESRI built for us and with us. It is a first-of-its-kind map of every plot and every parcel in the State, with every parcel having an ecological score for the purposes of land conservation.

Any Marylander can go online and enter their address in GreenPrint to see where the protected and unprotected areas are in their neighborhood, and in their state. Again, we're using maps to tell us what we should do together in terms of protecting ecologically essential woodlands and wetlands.

Like GreenPrint, another Smart Map—BayStat—enables us to apply performance measurement to our efforts to reduce pollution—nitrogen, phosphorus, soil sediment, and storm water run-off—that is threatening to choke the life out of a national treasure, the Chesapeake Bay.

You can click on any of the tributary basins and see whether we're making progress in such remedial activities as planting trees and other cover crops, or upgrades to sewage treatment plants.

But what about our connections with our Federal Government? When President Obama signed the American

Recovery and Reinvestment Act, with its \$4 billion in reinvestment and recovery funds for the State of Maryland, it was important for us to make sure that we invest these public resources at this critical time and that we do so efficiently, that we do so quickly and that we do so with a return on investment in all the places that matter.

The Recovery website we set up with ESRI's assistance allows any citizen, anywhere in Maryland, to enter his or her address on The Map and see what projects are going on near them, around them, in their own town, in their own county. And, importantly, where the money is being invested.

We tried to make sure that our Recovery website "flows," so to speak, from the Federal Recovery website. The Maryland-specific information is presented via two GIS maps that are part of our iMap. One of them is the overview map which displays statewide breakdown of funds allocated per the Recovery and Reinvestment funding categories of health care, education, transportation, housing, etc. Citizens can also click on their county to retrieve local information and see to what purposes these dollars are spent in their own counties.

Let's take Prince George's County. The overview map tells us that this county is receiving \$319.9 million in stimulus funds. If we click on the individual slices of the investment pie chart, we learn that of these investments, \$117 million is being targeted toward protecting educational achievement in Prince George's County.

Boosting the talents, the skills, the education of our people is very important to us. This year, Maryland was named by the *Education Week Magazine* as having the number one public school system in America. This achievement did not happen by chance; it was by choice and we choose to protect that achievement.

The more detailed map provides greater insight into Maryland's spending of Recovery and Reinvestment funds. And again, citizens can obtain break-

downs on each individual project in their own neighborhood. What's more, they can direct questions to their state and local governments if they have any concerns.

All these Smart Maps help us analyze the nature of problems we face and where the opportunities for progress are greatest. The pressing national issue of home foreclosures and their impact on housing values, and our individual and national wealth, is one such area where we, with the help of ESRI, are trying to have a positive impact—by deploying foreclosure prevention mortgage rescue assets in the areas most needed.

A related issue is unemployment. Maryland's unemployment rate is around 7.5 percent (somewhat better than the national rate of 9.4 percent), and with families hurting throughout the state, we need to know where they live and where the need for employment is greatest. But also, where more families are likely to depend on public transportation to get around—to get to that all important interview, or to work, or even school.



Id like to conclude with the question I posed at the outset: Why is it that virtually any government demonstration of GIS capability invariably prompts a citizen to ask "can you show me my house?" Is it to understand what is happening around me? Is it to know that I matter to my neighbors? Is it to know that I matter to my government? Is it to know that my government works and therefore matters to me? Or is it, perhaps, about a deeper yearning for connection. An innate human instinct to belong, and to better understand the bonds that connect us to the forces and to the people around us. — *Show me my house ... and all that's around it.*