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YORKINFO PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated January 19, 2012, from the Executive Director, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the YorkInfo Partners.

2. PURPOSE

This report informs Committee and Regional Council about the activities and achievements of the Partnership's 2011 work plan, describes specific products and services delivered to Partners through Memoranda of Understanding, and future directions for 2012.

3. BACKGROUND

YorkInfo is a GIS partnership between a number of tax-funded organizations in York Region

The Geomatics Branch of York Region leads and coordinates the YorkInfo Partnership. The Partnership works together to facilitate the use of geographic technologies among a number of tax-funded, not-for-profit organizations that operate within York Region. Membership includes the nine local municipalities, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA), the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), the York Catholic District School Board, and the York Region District School Board.

The Partnership is coordinated through a framework of member representatives participating on an Executive Board, Coordinating Committee and an Information Management and Technology Team (Attachment 1). These committees held eleven meetings and seminars in 2011. The Partnership looks toward continuous improvement by using task forces to develop common business applications, establish data standards and licence agreements and identify specifications for core geographic information such as orthophotography.

The YorkInfo Partnership collaboratively develops and delivers an annual work plan that is guided by the *YorkInfo Partnership Charter* developed in 2003. The work plan results in the:

- development of common standards and policies
- sharing of knowledge and skills
- creation and maintenance of quality geographic information
- development and acquisition of business applications
- reduced duplication of efforts and costs
- delivery of efficient programs for all member organizations

All partners receive a quarterly update of the data maintained by the Region.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Shared geographic information creation and maintenance reduces duplication of effort and creates a common information base that supports business activities

Our database contains information that is used on a regular basis by all partners.

Information includes:

- road network
- parcel fabric
- address points
- draft approved and pending plans of subdivision
- forestry
- water and wastewater facilities
- lakes and rivers

Data sharing for operational and project support saves money and promotes one source of high quality information

Data sharing is one of the primary goals and benefits of the Partnership. Creating and maintaining data by the appropriate source and sharing with other partner organizations:

- promotes accuracy
- saves money
- avoids duplication
- provides authoritative data

A few of the key projects that benefited from the exchange of data between organizations this year include:

- Capital Planning and Source Water Protection Program were supported by storm water data provided by local municipalities. Access to accurate and current data ensures conformity to legislated acts such as the Clean Water Act and the Lake Simcoe Protection Act.

- Bike path data provided by local municipalities were used to create the award-winning *York Region Cycling Map*. This map allows cyclists to plan routes and promotes sustainable transportation. This information was also made available in a web-based interactive map.
- Yonge Street Subway Extension design and planning was based on sidewalks, curbs, manholes and buried infrastructure data provided by local municipalities. Efficient access to data obtained from multiple owners and extending across multiple jurisdictions results in significant savings in time and money and allows for informed decision-making.
- Data exchange between York Region and local municipalities aided in Regional Official Plan and Regional Official Plan Amendment discussion of appeals and supported updates of Local Official Plans conformity with the Regional Official Plan.

Cost-effective, flexible GIS training promotes expanded use of GIS

Partners participate in the Region's corporate GIS training curriculum. Forty-six participants from the partner agencies, including planning, engineering and GIS professionals, participated in introductory to advanced level courses. The flexible training model allows users to develop the specific skills they need on their schedule.

Workshops hosted by partners to share knowledge on managing complex technical environments are a key benefit

As the GIS technical environment becomes increasingly complex, Partners benefit from sharing their knowledge, skills and experience in support of installing, configuring and managing server software and loading large and complex datasets. This reduces the need to use external vendors. In October, Geomatics, the Town of Newmarket and Esri Canada provided a joint workshop providing information to support all Partners in planning and migrating to ArcGIS 10. These types of workshops have been identified as one of the key benefits of the partnership.

2011 achievements promote the use of GIS for decision support and communication

Partner organizations collaborated on many activities throughout the year. The following highlight just a few of the 2011 achievements:

- **GeoAwareness Kit will promote the benefits and value of GIS**

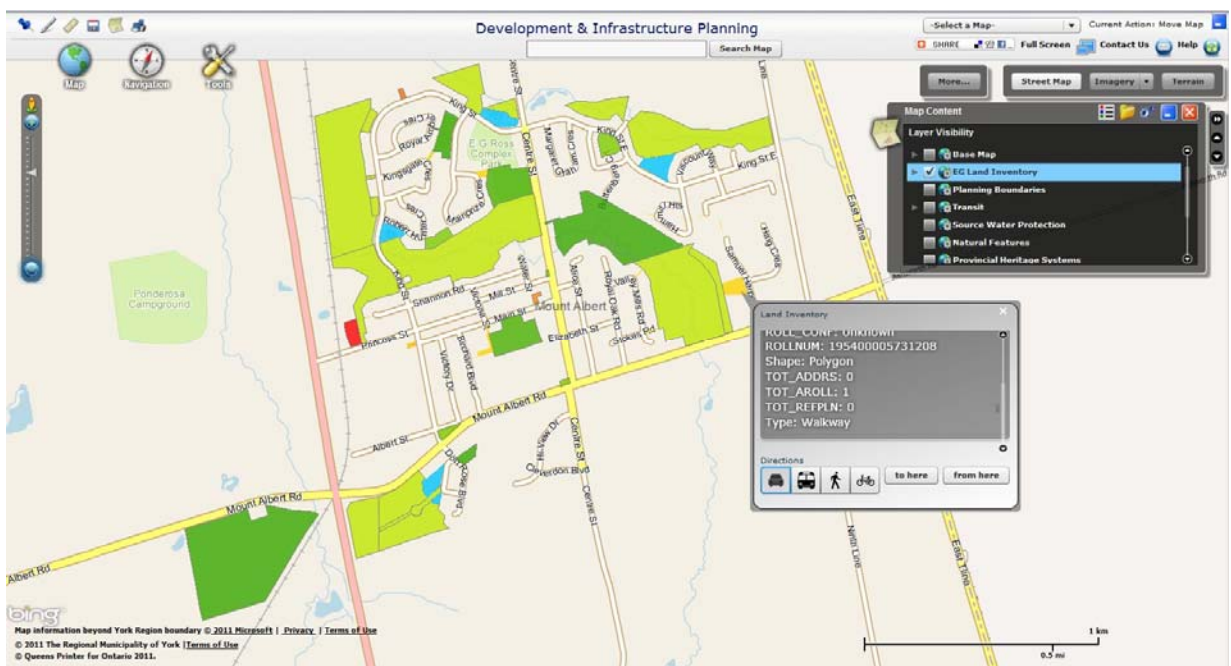
A task force was formed to develop a multimedia GIS and Partnership Awareness Kit that will be used to communicate to internal management and staff about the benefits and value of GIS and the YorkInfo Partnership. Case studies will document successful GIS projects quantifying the benefits of the initiative and serve as the foundation for video testimonials.

- **Common web mapping creates a “one window” look into information**

A secure development and infrastructure web map that provides access to planning boundaries, transit, source water protection and development plans was shared with East Gwillimbury, Vaughan and the York Region Catholic District School Board.

East Gwillimbury implemented *egViewer* (Figure 1) which takes the Region’s existing web mapping and integrates East Gwillimbury data, such as Town-owned properties into it. Internal staff use *egViewer* to view property information on top of current orthophotography to understand what structures are on a property. Future implementations will enable staff to view other information such as pipes and buildings on their mobile devices.

Figure 1
egViewer Web Map



- **3D models used by Partners to understand and communicate the impact of planning proposals to public**

3D models effectively visualize and communicate current and future scenarios of urban growth in Regional centres and corridors. The Partnership reduces the effort

and costs of creating urban structure models through sharing 3D model techniques and approach.

Training sessions have been held with planning and GIS staff from five local municipalities. Participants are now able to create 3D buildings, scenarios, flythroughs and videos. 3D models of over 90,000 existing buildings are available to use as context for planning needs. The models are being used now at local municipalities as an analytical tool for staff and consultants to understand characteristics for growth and revitalization areas. They are also used at public meetings to help visualize and communicate planning proposals. The goal is to have the Region maintain the existing building models, provide and manage the infrastructure, and Partner organizations to create future buildings and scenarios for inclusion into the shared database.

- **Vaughan Street Tree application helps manage response to Emerald Ash Borer**

The Region is collaborating with the City of Vaughan's Forestry Department to install its street tree inventory application running on tablet computers to assist in the monitoring of Emerald Ash Borer infestations. Vaughan will connect remotely to centrally hosted data. This solution helps forestry staff in Vaughan and York Region work together in the management of the infestation.

2012 plans will enhance self-service and ensure the Partnership continues to meet the needs of all Partners

Partnership activities are guided by an annual work plan developed collaboratively with all participants. In 2012, key activities will focus on enhancing self-service and conducting a review of the Partnership program to address changing needs.

The sharing of common geographic information is the primary benefit of the Partnership. Current practices require resource-intensive manual assembly and packaging of the data for delivery. New technologies will automate this process for near real-time delivery of quarterly updates. Interested Partners will implement *yrGeo3D*, a web-based application that provides users with the ability to navigate through various 3D scenarios.

Since the Partnership charter was first established significant advances have been made in GIS and it has been embraced as a core technology in many organizations. There has also been an increased recognition of the value of collaboration. In 2012, a review of the Partnership will build on previous success while recognizing emerging trends and opportunities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications of this report as costs for administering the Partnership are covered in the Geomatics budget. YorkInfo Partnership fees, and information and resource sharing agreements, contribute toward defraying costs.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

All nine local municipalities, both school boards and conservation authorities are members of the YorkInfo Partnership. They and the Region have the responsibility to deliver services that fully employ the best use of technology for the best value to our residents. Through this cooperative approach, the Partnership maximizes benefits realized through the implementation and maintenance of a geographic infrastructure that supports the management of our rapidly growing communities.

7. CONCLUSION

The YorkInfo Partnership continues to collaborate in the sharing of a common geographic information base, applications and resources to enable decision-making, support delivery of services and assist with communication to the public. In 2011, the Partnership was successful in: striking a task force to develop a GeoAwareness Kit; implementing a common viewer in East Gwillimbury; adding 2011 orthophotography; training staff on how to build 3D models to help visualize and communicate urban growth scenarios; working with the City of Vaughan on an Street Tree application for Emerald Ash Borer; and, hosting a joint workshop on best practices of migrating to the new version of GIS software.

In 2012, Partners will continue to work together on established activities including completing the GeoAwareness Kit and enhance the self-service environment. A review of the Partnership will build on previous success while recognizing emerging trends and opportunities.

For more information on this report, please contact John Houweling, Director, Geomatics Branch at (905) 830-4444 Ext. 1529.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause is attached to this report.)

YorkInfo Partnership Committee Representatives

Executive Committee

Shawn Conde – Town of Georgina
Teodor Tesca – Town of Markham
Geoff Peat – Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority
Adam McDonald – York Catholic District School Board
John Houweling – York Region

Coordinating Committee

Cory Fagan – Town of Aurora
Carolyn Kellington – Town of East Gwillimbury
Shawn Conde – Town of Georgina
Kristen Bond – Township of King
Teodor Tesca – Town of Markham
Annaliese Vollick – Town of Newmarket
Dan Bainbridge – Town of Richmond Hill
Ingrid Harris – City of Vaughan
Alan Drodz – Town of Whitchurch Stouffville
Tom Pechkovsky – York Catholic District School Board
Gilbert Luk – York Region District School Board
Geoff Peat – Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority
Chris Gerstenkorn – Toronto Region Conservation Authority
John Houweling – York Region
Debra Kelloway – York Region

Information & Technology Committee

Jennifer Schoutsen – Town of Aurora
Carolynne Saxton – Town of East Gwillimbury
Ryan Zabielski – Town of Georgina
Kristen Bond – Township of King
Ewan Burke – Town of Markham
Annaliese Vollick – Town of Newmarket
Todd Kroeplin – Town of Richmond Hill
Thomas Hall – City of Vaughan
Tammy Chung – Town of Whitchurch Stouffville
Adam McDonald – York Catholic District School Board
Gilbert Luk – York Region District School Board
Darren Campbell – Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority
Dan Clayton – Toronto and Region Conservation Authority