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- Visit us on the web at <http://www.columbusga.org/engineering2/GIS.htm>
- Send us your comments or story ideas! Email to GIS Email
- Look up and map city streets in the Department of Engineering Street Name Inventory System (DESNI) here: DESNI

Breaking GIS News!

CCG now has its very first Geographic Information Systems Professional (GISP). Congratulations to Darrell Copeland!

Upcoming GIS Events:

Southeastern Regional User Group Conference
April 26 -28 Charlotte, NC

ESRI International User Conference July 12-16
San Diego, CA

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Welcome to the GIS Division Newsletter! We hope to bring you news about our work and future projects, and more! Watch this space!

The Road to GIS in Columbus: Q & A With Jeff Griffin, GIS Coordinator



Q: How was the GIS Division formed?

A: There were a couple of people in the Engineering Department hand drawing the maps and the planning department was making the zoning maps. At some point the decision was made to use GIS software to maintain the parcels and so the personnel who were working on these maps were the first members of the GIS Division. Originally it was housed in the IT Department but because of the amount of foot traffic they were receiving, the division was moved back to Engineering Department.

Q: Before GIS, how did they create and maintain tax maps?

A: They did it by hand. They would photocopy the surveys and blow it up or shrink it down until it fit with the existing parcels, cut it out with a exacto knife and

place it on the taxmap. It was the best method they had at the time!

Q: You came to this position from a “computer” background. What were your first impressions of the GIS Division?

A: I knew almost all of the people here from installing Lotus Notes on their computers. At first, I spent time just listening to everything that was going on. People in the division struck me as being very helpful and dependable. I wanted to make them the most effective and as utilized as they could be. It was important to define our core responsibilities. I sent out a survey on what our responsibilities were. In other words, what things we are responsible for. I analyzed what we did well and what needed improvement. Then I ranked them and paired the list down to 4 core areas.

Q: What was the first GIS project you worked on?

A: We corrected all the tax parcels that didn't have a PIN! (parcel identification number) There were 13,500 of them to review. It took four of us about 3 – 4months.

Q: How have the division's functions changed over the years?

A: The addition of the 911 CAD system has brought a lot of changes. We are doing much more work than tax maps now. We serve the Public Safety and Engineering Departments. In fact, a lot of city departments are using our data. I think of the work we do for the tax assessors to be like the trunk of a tree, and the other departments are branches of the tree.

Q: What are the goals of the GIS Division?

A: Short term, I want our data to be accessible to 80% of the city's employees, probably through the intranet. Long term, we want GIS to be everywhere – with 80% of the employees actually using our data. We have a lot of plans and an exciting road ahead of us!