

County–City GIS for DeKalb County and the Cities of Auburn, Butler, and Garrett, Indiana

Goals

- Better public information services
- Enhanced interdepartmental and cross-jurisdictional cooperation
- Holistic approaches to decision-making and communications

Results

- Increased public trust through improved communication
- Better internal communications among agencies, improving decision making and heightening employee morale
- Less conflict at public meetings
- New opportunities for data acquisition and use
- Better, faster, and more complete answers
- Less duplicate efforts and related costs
- Enhanced public services overall through better communication, information, and decisions

Introduction

In the early 1930s, as many companies were being beaten by the Great Depression, the Auburn–Cord–Duesenberg family of cars was riding high. Evolving from the Eckhart Carriage Company of Auburn, Indiana, the Auburn Automobile Company was born at the turn of the 20th century. By the time of the stock market crash of 1929, the company, under the management of transportation tycoon E.L. Cord, had acquired Duesenberg Motors of Indianapolis and launched the Cord line of automobiles. Tiny Auburn, Indiana, was giving Detroit a run for its money.

1931 saw peak production of more than 34,000 Auburns and Cords. Known for their style and high performance, Auburns, Cords, and Duesenbergs were racing in the Indianapolis 500 and being used as limousines. Though most models were competitively priced, stylish cars were starting to be seen as a luxury item as the Great Depression wore on. E.L. Cord saw the writing on the wall—he divested his transportation interests in 1937 and went into the real estate business.

In the 1950s, nostalgia and prosperity led enthusiasts to form the Auburn–Cord–Duesenberg Club. The club soon launched an annual festival held in, of course, Auburn, Indiana. The festival, held each Labor Day weekend, annually brings hundreds of thousands of visitors to this town of about 12,000 people. The Auburn–Cord–Duesenberg Museum, which opened in 1974, exhibits 115 vintage cars to the public in the former national headquarters of the Auburn Automobile Company. Located 20 miles north of Fort Wayne, Auburn rightfully calls itself “The Home of the Classics.”

Just as Auburn was innovating automobiles in the ‘20s and ‘30s, the town continues to innovate today in ways more often seen in larger cities. As the county seat of DeKalb County, Auburn has partnered with the county government and other nearby towns to provide better taxpayer services through shared technical expertise and data. The engine driving this partnership is geographic information system (GIS) technology.



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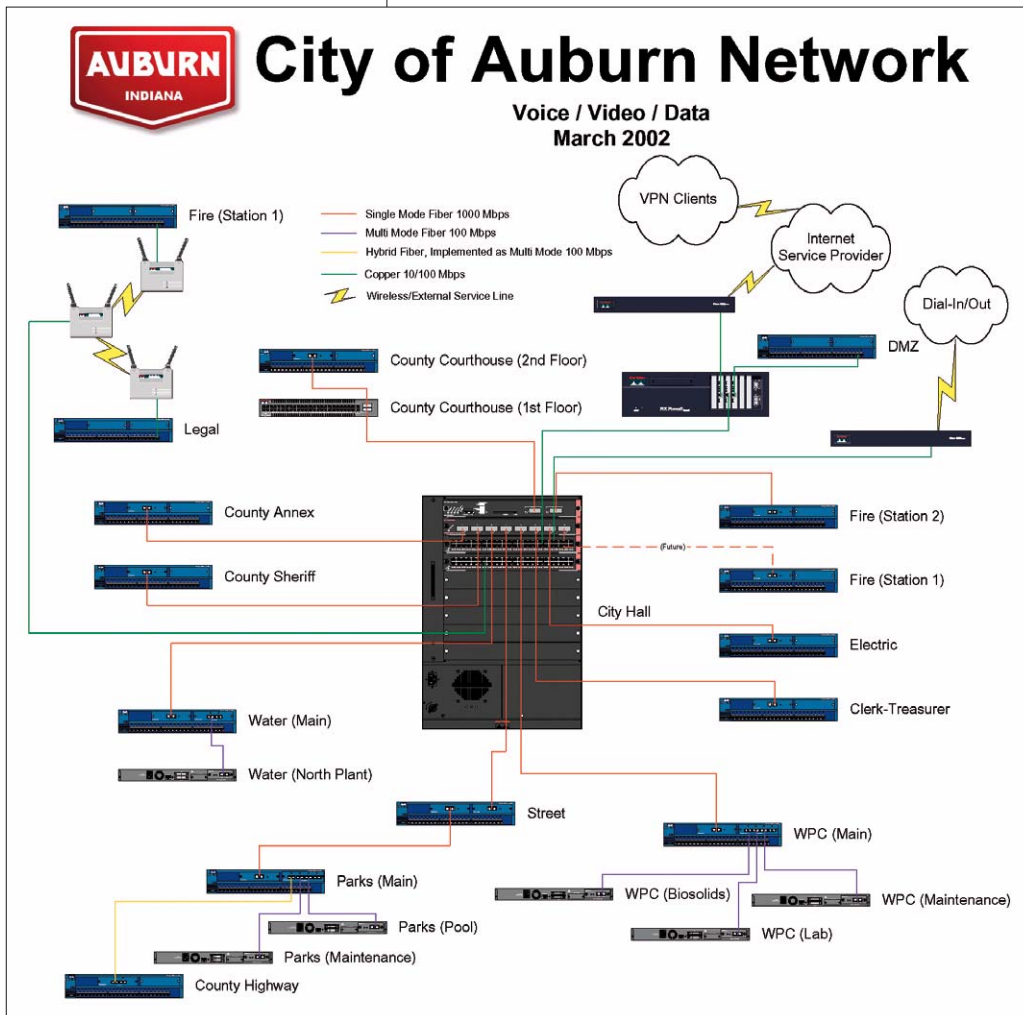
An Enterprise is Born

DeKalb County and the city of Auburn, Indiana, have developed an enterprise GIS that spans political boundaries and has become an outstanding example of collaborative government. In 1998, the two governments defined a need to improve public information services, promote interdepartmental and cross-jurisdictional cooperation, and encourage holistic approaches to decision making and communications. The county and city identified a joint GIS as a primary means of achieving these goals. DeKalb County and the city of Auburn formed the joint County-City GIS (CoCiGIS) Committee to assist policy makers in implementing the partnership and processes necessary for successful implementation of a joint enterprise GIS. In 1999, CoCiGIS was expanded to include the cities of Butler (population 2,725) and Garrett (population 5,803), Indiana.

There are many components that have contributed to the success of CoCiGIS including

- Adoption of interlocal agreements (ILAs) that define roles and responsibilities in the partnership.
- Establishing an appropriate data sharing technology infrastructure.
- Jointly acquiring data sets commonly used by multiple partners to reduce public expenditures.
- A commitment to improve information work flows through GIS and related information technologies.
- Making education a priority. The committee educates decision makers, users, and the public through monthly CoCiGIS meetings, regular presentations to decision makers and the public, publication of meeting minutes via the CoCiGIS Web page, and participation in GIS Day. This strong educational effort has helped the community and local governments understand and embrace the role of GIS in public service.

However, the most important contributor to the success of the enterprise GIS is the spirit of cooperation and trust between the stakeholder organizations. For instance, the county GIS coordinator and the city GIS coordinator cooperate so closely that they virtually share an office. CoCiGIS is acting as a catalyst for other forms of consensus and collaborative activities such as increased data sharing between county and city emergency services and joint use of a computer training lab.



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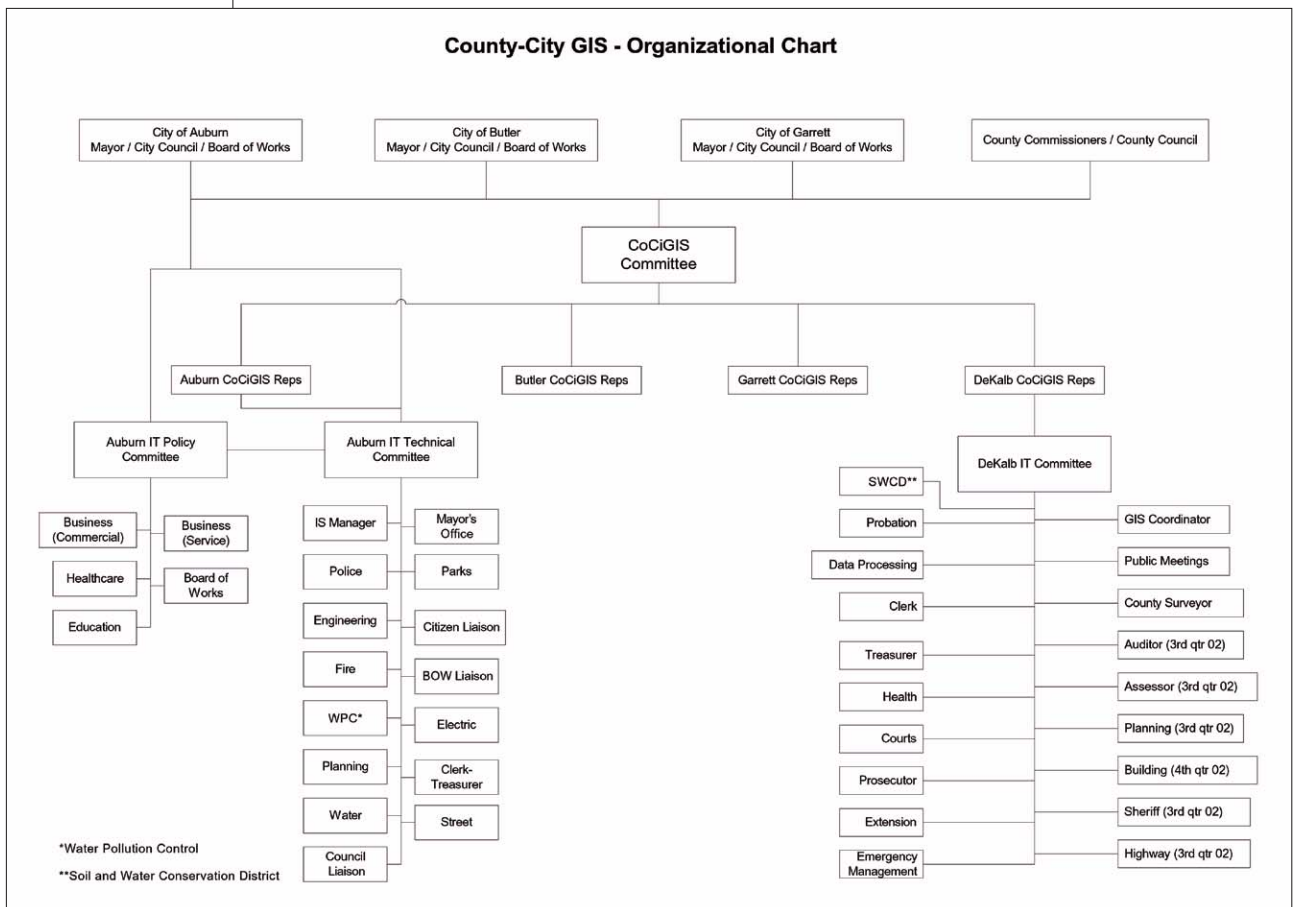
Organization

Enterprise means collaboration to CoCiGIS. The committee spans political and organizational boundaries and helps unify the work of local governments in DeKalb County. CoCiGIS provides a framework for collaborative work and decision making. The enterprise means mitigation of duplicate effort, allowing more time for thoughtful analysis and observation. It fosters open communication, dissolves turf battles, and helps agencies realize the potential of freely flowing information.

The county will soon begin integrating GIS into more and more departments, but is currently supporting desktop GIS in its Surveying Department and for public meetings. The partnership has enabled Butler to obtain high-quality GIS data including aerial photos and data sets. Most of the technical research, including quality assurance and quality control, was conducted by the larger entities with staff that were doing the work anyway. As a result, Butler has a high-quality product, access to the entire countywide system, and free technical support from staff members who are not

even a long-distance call away. The cost to Butler was very manageable and the GIS is used daily by the city planner, who shares responsibility for planning, building, economic development, parks, and utilities. In Garrett, it is used by the city planner and police chief with uses planned for other areas. Finally, in Auburn, it is available on every desktop in every department and can be seen at most public meetings. Auburn supports users with regular training on GIS concepts and tools. CoCiGIS plans to provide data to the public via the Internet in early 2003. GIS files are stored on the CoCiGIS server—called “Jack”—and are accessible by all city of Auburn and county offices via a domain trust relationship. The city of Auburn and county of DeKalb both win by sharing the costs of the network.

CoCiGIS partnering agencies use GIS for a variety of local government applications including public meetings, map and data requests by the public, utility management, engineering, traffic sign management, park systems management, planning and zoning, and emergency services.



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System Design

ESRI software and extensions

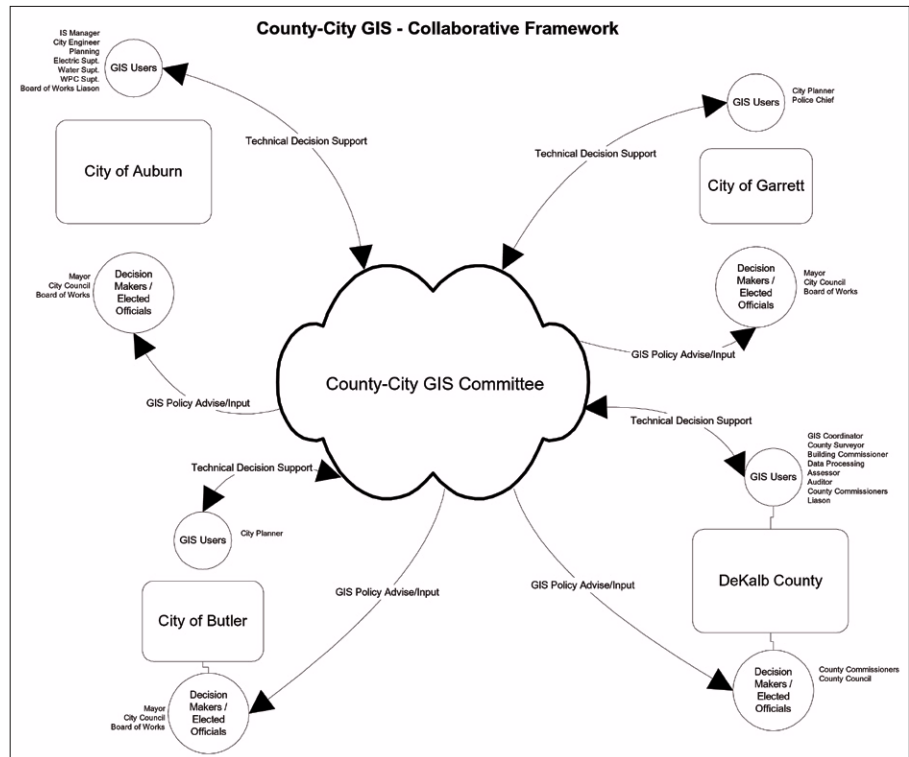
- ArcGIS 8.2
- ArcSDE 8.2
- ArcGIS Publisher
- ArcGIS Spatial Analyst
- ArcGIS 3D Analyst
- ArcIMS 4
- ArcPad 6 (beginning 3rd quarter 2002)

DBMS: MS SQL Server 2000
Operating System: Windows 2000
Server Configuration: Compaq ProLiant 3000R Dual PIII550, RAID 5, 2 GB SDRAM
Number of Layers: 40 planimetric, 50 cadastral, 60 utility features, 20 other
Type of Data: Orthophotography, planimetrics (contours, buildings, road surfaces, water bodies), cadastral—4th quarter 2002 (subdivisions, parcels, lots, easements, addresses), utility—1st quarter 2003 Auburn (electric features, water features, sanitary features), other (zoning, traffic signs, land use)
Size of Database: Geodatabase=~200 MB, TIF=20 GB, MrSID=500 MB countywide, 320 MB city of Auburn

Benefits

- Saved more than \$275,000 in GIS data conversion by sharing costs with CoCiGIS partners.
- Obtained a Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) built upon local, accurate contour data, equating to more than \$175,000 in regional, state, and federal contributions.
- Provides daily visual and decision support to the Auburn Building Department, where a front-counter PC provides access to floodplain, building, zoning, orthophotography, and other pertinent data for customers and staff.
- Used as an economic development tool by the city of Butler to identify available sites, their size and composition, accessibility, and adjacent industry. GIS is used to map and inventory the city of Butler’s active tax abatements and parcels with appropriate tax abatement designations.
- Assisted in the research and adoption of Auburn’s Sexually Oriented Business Ordinance.
- Inspired similar cooperative efforts in the area of law enforcement information systems.
- Enabled the creation of a countywide Public Land Survey System (PLSS) control database, providing a comprehensive catalog of PLSS control in the county, and allowed the county to increase compliance with State Law.

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- Assisted in the countywide reprecincting/redistricting process.
- Allows the city of Auburn Engineering Department to produce engineering drawings in the same GIS environment (profiles, construction specifications, etc.).
- Used by the city of Auburn in regional economic development efforts, helping to showcase available sites, buildings, and utilities.
- Assists in the daily operation, planning, and management of the city of Auburn electric, water, and wastewater utilities.
- Provides a means to store and manage city of Auburn addresses, providing decision support to the Auburn Address Committee (ad hoc committee recommending decisions to the Plan Commission, composed of the post office, E911, fire, police, street, planning, and other departments).
- Assisted in a comprehensive land use inventory of the city of Auburn.
- Provides daily visual and decision support to Butler's Community Development Department to maintain code enforcement information, park inventories and records, building and planning data, and wetland information.
- Allowed the city of Butler to create an address database that is used to maintain addresses and assign new addresses. The address database will eventually be deployed to emergency service providers.

