

ESRI International User Conference 2006

City of Philadelphia, Mayor's Office of Information Services - GIS Services Group

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Project Goal

Philadelphia Mayor John Street took office in 1999, promising to revitalize the city's neglected areas with his Neighborhood Transition Initiative (NTI). A major objective of NTI is the revitalization of neighborhoods through residential housing and business development. Early in the initiative, it was recognized that there was a need to develop a tool for describing social, economic, and geographic factors that influence locational decisions and also categorize areas for appropriate intervention and investment strategies. In addition, the tool needed to be shared between different departments and organizations working with the City but not require GIS expertise to successfully operate the analysis. DecisionMaps is an innovative tool that allows end-users to construct scenarios with criteria that match needs with City programs, services and assets.

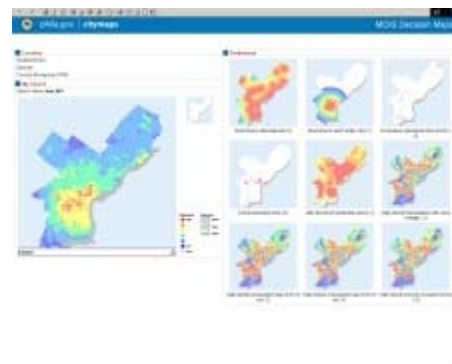
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Business Problem Solved

Location decisions have an enormous impact upon the type of services the City provides, underlining the importance of making informed decisions. These decisions are based upon a mix of geographic and demographic factors that are represented in a series of map layers or what might be thought of as decisions factors.

To provide a lens for viewing, analyzing, and accessing these decision factors, the City developed DecisionMaps, a web-based mapping, business siting and economic development tool. DecisionMaps takes a user-centered approach to business siting, couples it with a map interface, and lets the user iteratively create site suitability maps to inform business siting and facilitate economic development.

Technology Implemented



DecisionMaps is based on custom software written by Avencia Incorporated and leverages ArcGIS Server 9.1 and the Spatial Extension for Server GIS. The development and production environment includes: ESRI ArcIMS, ESRI ArcSDE, Oracle, Tomcat, Windows Server 2000/2003, IIS, .Net Framework, C#.

Development Team Biography

Robert Cheetham is President of Avencia, Inc., a Philadelphia-based firm that specializes in developing visualization and geospatial analysis software that makes sophisticated information available on the Internet. Robert has an MLA in Landscape Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania and a BA in Japanese Studies from the University of Michigan. Prior to founding Avencia, Robert served as a developer and analyst for the University of Pennsylvania, the City of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Police Department. Mr. Cheetham led a team of developers including Avencia's Senior Developer, Rich Tuttle, and database analyst Bradley Breuer.

Jim Query is Director of GIS and Enterprise Technology for the City of Philadelphia. Jim has over 20 years of professional experience working in private sector consulting, private, non-profit research and consulting, education, and public sector. Jim has a BS in Landscape Architecture from Penn State and a Masters of Regional Planning from the University of Pennsylvania.

Clinton Johnson is Senior GIS Developer and Enterprise IT Architect for the City of Philadelphia. Clinton has over 10 years experience in database, software development, systems architecture and GIS. Clinton has worked for the City of Philadelphia since 1994, most recently for the Mayor's Office of Information Services.

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