PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS – February 16, 2012

Sustainable Innovation using Open Data

Presented by Luke Closs, Co-founder, Recollect

In this talk, Luke will use the example of Recollect.net to show how open data innovation can scale into a sustainable business that can save municipalities money and provide better services for their citizens. He will talk about the different business models that can be used, the difficulties of innovating with municipalities, and how small municipalities stand to gain the most from open data standardization.

Open Data Initiatives, Mobile Devices & Geo-Applications

Presented by Susan Romeo-Gilbert, Principle Platform Strategist, Microsoft

As the concept of Open Government picks up momentum around the world, many Governments are considering how best to implement open data projects. What does it take to make data open and accessible? How does GIS data become useful to citizens and developers, and how does this drive innovation and citizen engagement? In this session, the Microsoft open software team will demonstrate how the transformational power of open data coupled with cloud computing can enable Open Government through easier/quicker deployment, better efficiency and higher citizen engagement.

The team will show examples of live Government projects for visualizing and interacting with Open GIS Data from around the globe. The examples of Open Data projects are centred on the 3 primary principles of Open Government – Transparency, Participation, and Collaboration. We will see Microsoft technologies in use and enabling different capabilities, as well as introduce basic Open Government and Open Data concepts. A number of open data application examples are provided to demonstrate utilizing Microsoft with other technologies, in different platform configurations. [Gov 2.0, Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Windows Azure for Cloud Computing: On- & Off- Premise, Mashups, Crowdsourcing]

The presentation will show examples of open data applications, built on mobile platforms, taking advantage of GPS and geo-location capabilities and integration with social networking tools such as Twitter and Facebook, to give a richer real-time user experience. It will also touch on "The Open Data Protocol" (OData), a Web protocol for querying and updating data that provides a way to unlock your data and free it from silos that exist in applications today. OData applies and builds upon Web technologies such as HTTP, Atom Publishing Protocol (AtomPub) and JSON, to provide access to information from a variety of applications, services, and stores. OData is being used to expose and access information from a variety of sources including, but not limited to, relational databases, file systems, content management systems and traditional Web sites.

Building the City of Vancouver's Open Data GIS Platform

Presented by Meng Li, GIS Applications Manager, City of Vancouver

This presentation will talk about the City of Vancouver experience in implementing the Open Data Initiative with a government-as-platform approach for fulfilling government roles in a new era of open government. The City has focused more on publishing geospatial data and on building a more open-data-ready technology platform that includes both a front-end portal as well as back-end enterprise systems. The topics of the presentation include the strategies and approach we have taken, and opportunities and challenges we have identified since the project implementation in 2009. We are very proud that the City has won the 2011 British Columbia Business Innovator award for its open data initiative (http://www.bcbusinessonline.ca/2011/04/04/city-of-vancouver).

Improve Operations with Volunteer Geographic Information (VGI)

Presented by Karen Stewart, Industry Manager - Public Works, ESRI Canada

Mobile communications are enabling a more effective two way communications channel between residents and organizations. This new technical workflow is enabling real civic action to create smarter cities, empowering citizens and optimizing government processes. These new platforms and solutions leverage cloud and mobile technologies to provide solutions that integrates back office government workflows to citizens via their mobile devices, whether iPhone, Blackberry, Android or WP7. The optimization of input channels and work-flow, using VGI data saves municipalities time money and improves transparency. In this session, we will explain and demonstrate how municipalities like Strathcona County, Alberta, Canada deploy these real-time field collaboration tools and link them to back end asset management & CRM solutions to create efficiencies in their government processes. The intent is to demonstrate how input from citizens can help create efficiencies if managed appropriately. These Apps need to work with the back office or a citizen data silo is created that really cannot be consumed into anything useful. Strathcona County recognized this and decided to utilize staff to help define scope before rolling out their VGI application to citizens.

Identifying the Origins and Destinations of Transit Customers Using Farebox Data

Presented by Michael Grant, Manager - Monitoring & Forecasting, BC Transit

Like many transportation companies, providing customers and analysts with access to "usable" information is key. This presentation discusses how BC Transit applied spatial data transformation processes to farebox ridership data; it shows how a simple swipe of a transit pass can amount to gold when trying to understand your customers. Through examples with a local community, we'll show how the farebox data can be used to identify hot spots of ridership, major origins/destinations, and major transfer locations. By attending this presentation, both technical and non-technical transportation professionals will gain a better understanding of ways they too can implement simple data transformation workflows to deliver innovative solutions to common GIS or transit challenges.

Regional Traffic Data Systems (RTDS) – The Road to the Future of "Open Data"

Presented by Keenan Kitasaka, Manager - Intelligent Transportation Systems, TransLink and
Henry Ng, Project Manager, Intelligent Transportation Systems, TransLink

This presentation will provide an overview of RTDS, the latest project in the region to acquire "probe-based" information in an open data environment. The RTDS project acquires positioning information through cell phone signals as "probes", converts the data to travel time and speed profiles in key corridors, displays them in real time for customers, and archives the information in a database for further analysis of road network and corridor performance. The system is an innovative and cost-effective solution to address the lack of traffic data in the region and will provide information 24-7, 365 days a year. The real time information will be integrated into a public-facing web site to allow customers to make better transportation choices. As well, the information will be sent to the Regional Transportation Management Centre (RTMC) where the speeds will be monitored by staff for incident and congestion management purposes. The archived information will be available to planners and engineers in the public sector and to private sector groups, subject to controls.

An objective of the project will be to provide access to the information in an "open data" environment. Various levels of the public sector agencies are striving towards providing easier access to data to leverage the private sector's innovation and ability to develop applications and provide value-added services. However, there are challenges to operating in an open data environment, especially within the confines of the Privacy Act.

The discussion will provide an overview of the project and touch on issues encountered in an open data environment such as privacy, security, ownership, and access.

How to Run an Open Data Hackathon

Presented by Herb Lainchbury, President and CEO, Dynamic Solutions Inc.

Abstract coming soon.

The Journey to Open Data

Presented by David Wrate, Director of Citizen Engagement, Province of BC

The Province of BC is the first province in Canada to implement an open data program. David Wrate will provide a view into what brought the program to life, share lessons they've learned, and chart a course for the future.

Open Data: How the Vancouver Public is Using It

Presented by Darrin Fast, Technology Planner, City of Vancouver

This presentation explores open data as an enabling platform and showcases some of the great and innovative work that has been built using data from the City of Vancouver's open data catalogue. The presentation will feature some of the many applications built on Vancouver's open data platform and will explore its use in the research and academic communities as well as demonstrating the social aspects of open data and how it can be used as a tool for decision making and civic engagement.

Why Open Data?

Presented by David Eaves, Open Government and Open Data Advocate

A public policy entrepreneur, open government activist and negotiation expert, David is retained by several governments to advise on open government and open data, works with two spin-offs of the Harvard Negotiation Project and advises businesses on open source strategies and community management.

David writes on open innovation, public policy, public service sector renewal, open source and network systems. He posts multiple times a week on his blog, publishes regularly in various forums including the Globe and Mail website, the Toronto Star, and written numerous chapters such as his piece in the O'Reilly Media book on Open Government. He is also frequently invited to speak on these issues, as well as on open government, policy making, negotiation and strategy, to executives, policymakers, and students.

Open Data Panel

Moderated by James Andrusiw, Application Services Manager, City of Coquitlam

Our panel of local GIS professionals will share their insights and experience producing and using Open Data catalogues within their organizations. We will discuss recommendations for people considering or currently using Open Data and future innovations on the horizon.

The format will pose several rounds of questions ranging from "getting started" to "what's next?" and seminar attendees will be encouraged to ask their own questions of the panellists.

Panellists:

- Greg Babinski, Finance and Marketing Manager, King County GIS Center
- Herb Lainchbury, President, Dynamic Solutions Inc
- Jonathan Mark, GIS Manager, City of Vancouver
- Sean Simpson, GIS Manager, City of Surrey
- Derik Woo, Manager, Geomatics Services, Township of Langley
- David Wrate, Director of Citizen Engagement, Province of BC