Upcoming GIS Projects

NLCOG’s Geographic Information System (GIS) program has several projects that will be undertaken for the 2005 fiscal year. Among those projects that are currently underway is the updating of the buildings layer for Caddo Parish according to the 2001 aerial photos. NLCOG GIS analysts, Kay Raney and Kevin Reeves, along with Liza Long, NLCOG Urban Planner, are drawing each building and labeling them to show the business name. Also being updated in this dataset is the physical address of each building with information obtained from the Caddo Parish Tax Assessor and the Shreveport - Bossier City Polk City Directory. This is an on-going process and is being done so that NLCOG can have the most up-to-date information as possible.

NLCOG is also working with the Caddo Parish School Board to update the school attendance zones, bus routes, school board districts, and also verifying physical locations of all schools within the Caddo Parish system.

The Caddo Parish Public Safety Project is another project that is currently being worked on. This entails using the Global Positioning System (GPS) to locate and map the fire stations in Shreveport and the Caddo Parish Fire District stations. In addition, NLCOG will be locating and mapping the Caddo Parish Sheriff Substations, rural emergency centers, and health offices.

While maintaining her planning duties, Liza is assisting the GIS team by verifying the Shreveport neighborhoods boundaries to the basemap to ensure that NLCOG has the most accurate information available for its member agencies.

Q & A: Metropolitan Statistical Areas

What is it?

A Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is a core area containing a substantial population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of economic and social integration with that core area. Each MSA must have at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more residents. The largest city in each MSA is designated a “principal city.” In our MSA, Shreveport is designated as the “principal city.” As of the 2000 Census, Bossier (pop. 98,310), Caddo (pop. 252,161), and DeSoto Parishes (pop. 25,494) comprised our MSA. This equates to a total MSA population of 375,966 persons and ranks as the 105th largest MSA nationally.

Why is it important?

It is critical to accurately determine a metropolitan area’s population, as well as other demographic characteristics (age, race, etc.), because it is an objective measure in determining an area’s need for public sector (federal government) resources. A large majority of Federal program expenditures are based upon an MSA’s population characteristics.

People from many walks of life use MSA population data to advocate for causes, research markets, target advertising, locate pools of skilled workers, prevent diseases, even rescue disaster victims.

When does it change?

The large majority of changes take place on the basis of decennial census data. Changes in the definition of an MSA have occurred since the 1950 census and consisted mainly of:

- The recognition of new areas as they reached the minimum required city or urbanized area population, and
- The addition of parishes to existing areas as new census data showed them to qualify.

In some instances, formerly separate areas have been merged, components of an area have been transferred from one area to another, or components have been dropped from an area.

In 1949, the US Census recognized Shreveport (Caddo Parish) as a MSA. Over time, as the area’s population increased and new development occurred in adjacent Parishes, Bossier Parish (1960 Census) and DeSoto Parish (2000 Census) were included in the MSA. During the 1990s, Webster Parish was a portion of the MSA while DeSoto Parish was not.

How does it affect me?

From an individual’s perspective, Census statistics help determine where to build more roads (add lanes, install stoplights or lower speed limits, too) and hospitals (or free health clinics) and child-care centers. They also help identify which communities need more federal help for job training. Head Start or the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program, which provides dairy and other nutritional supplements to new and nursing mothers and their children.

NLCOG Selected for Brownfields Grant

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded NLCOG a Brownfields Assessment Grant for the purpose of conducting community outreach activities and performance of Phase II post-demolition environmental assessments and cleanup planning at two properties in central Shreveport which are part of the InterTech Science Park.

Assessment and cleanup of these two sites will help move along development of the park and will provide many employment opportunities in this low-income, high-unemployment neighborhood. Shreveport’s inner city has hundreds of acres of potentially contaminated industrial sites that have been left vacant due to the regional decline in the 1980s. EPA’s Brownfields Program allows states, communities, and other economic development stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, clean up, and reuse these areas that are potentially contaminated.

For more information about NLCOG’s grant please visit www.nlcoogle.com. For more information on EPA news, events, and publications, please visit the EPA Brownfields web site at: www.epa.gov/brownfields.

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Plan: “Roadmap” for future development
governments, private developers, transit operators, and parish-wide education leaders. The Delphi Committee addressed many issues that included establishing objectives and goals, developing of population and employment projections, identifying deficiencies and needs within the transportation system, proposing solutions and prioritizing actions. In addition to the goals developed, the plan also focuses on seven factors outlined in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). The result of their efforts is a plan of nearly $1.5 billion in improvements for the region over the next 25 years.

An important objective of the plan was to identify emerging congestion and develop cost-effective measures to address it. The study sought more than just a one-time snapshot of traffic problems. The plan provides a list of troubled areas, and it also details the means for continued updates.

The plan also emphasizes the importance of continued deployment of congestion and safety management systems that offer a structured approach to identification and remediation of many of the area’s more serious transportation problems. There are recommendations for railroad and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) solutions that will greatly improve the safety and efficiency of the existing transportation infrastructure.

While the plan focuses primarily on local needs, it also furnishes a roadmap for longer-range implementation of higher cost freeway and other infrastructure improvements, such as I-49 and I-69. All of these projects combine to enable the region to compete more effectively for economic development and expansion.

Goals of the Transportation Plan Update

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<th>Goals of the Transportation Plan Update</th>
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<td>Minimize Congestion</td>
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<td>Optimize Use of Existing Transportation Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Relate Transportation to Economic Growth</td>
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<td>Enhance Transportation Safety</td>
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<td>Maintain High Quality of Life</td>
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Regional Plan Approved

On June 30, 2004, the Transportation Policy Committee unanimously approved the Caddo—Bossier Transportation Plan Update 2001-2025. Included in the transportation plan are projects ranging from construction of Interstate 69 to major area road widenings. The purpose of the transportation plan is to identify transportation needs within the community and coordinate the local governments in their response. Citizens of the area experience a high quality of life and freedom from traffic congestion contributes to this. Our area has been successful not only with transportation planning, but also with development and implementation of improvements.

In order to guide the process, the Delphi Committee was appointed. This committee included elected officials, technical and planning representatives from local

Urbanized Area Boundary Approved

On June 30, 2004, NLCOG’s Transportation Policy Committee met to discuss and approve the 2000 Urbanized Area Boundary/Functional Classification Map. The purpose of the map is to provide a visual boundary to elected officials and the public detailing what areas are eligible for different types of federal funding based on population density. An urbanized area (UZA) is defined by the Census Bureau as “a statistical geographic entity...consisting of a central core and adjacent densely settled territory that together contain at least 50,000 people, generally with an overall population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile.”

The UZA is reevaluated every ten years along with the new Census data. The following represents the approved 2000 UZA Boundary: