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More States to Integrate Mapping Technology into Elections Systems as NSGIC Project Moves into Second Phase

November 20, 2019, New Orleans, LA - National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) has been awarded \$300,000 by the bipartisan Democracy Fund Voice organization for the second phase of NSGIC's Geo-Enabled Elections project. This continues a national effort by state government geospatial information officers and coordinators to work with other state agencies, local elections officials and state elections offices, national GIS (geographic information system) and elections organizations, and federal partners to identify opportunities to leverage this powerful technology to strengthen elections management and citizen engagement.

"As an organization made up of GIS leaders in state government, NSGIC is uniquely positioned to leverage the innovative work of states to use GIS for elections data. We have enlisted those innovators to contribute and advise throughout the project. Collaboration has been key to the success of the project. Relationships built in the first phase of the project will be invaluable to the work of the second phase as the project seeks to increase engagement and, ultimately, impact," said Molly Schar, NSGIC Executive Director.

The Geo-Enabled Elections project was launched in October 2017 and will now continue for an additional two years. The project aims to help strengthen electoral systems by supporting states in the adoption of GIS. Concretely, this means encouraging state governments to replace non-spatial 'address file' systems with election precinct and voter data in a GIS format, leveraging that format's inherent visual and analytical advantages.

With its second phase, the project turns to focus on working hands-on with up to ten more states through the pilot program, developing a curriculum for elections officials on foundations of GIS in elections, increasing awareness of the benefits of geo-enabling elections systems among elections stakeholders, and developing policy guidance and advocacy tools to support integration of GIS in elections.

"Accurate boundary lines and efficient voter placement are the building blocks of our elections and are tantamount to the integrity of the democratic process. Democracy Fund Voice is a proud sponsor of efforts such as NSGIC Geo-Enabled Elections as a way to further ensure that the American electorate is well served," said Tammy Patrick, Senior Advisor at Democracy Fund Voice.

[A report of the work](#) done in the first phase of the project is now available. Accomplishments in the first two years include developing an inventory of state implementations of GIS-based elections systems, giving workshops and presentations at national conferences, and publishing detailed reports sharing the state of GIS in elections from the perspective of election officials and state GIS leaders. In addition, five pilot and case

studies were created, a best practices guide (both in detail and brief versions) was developed, and a new website to house all of the resources was launched. An inaugural Elections GeoSummit convened stakeholders from the national, state, and local levels to discuss best practices for geo-enabling elections in the United States.

These documents and other important resources can be found in a PDF format on the website, elections.nsgic.org.

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The National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) promotes the efficient development and management of location-based information resources, and advocates for innovative, strategic use of these assets to advance the interests of states, tribes, regions, local governments, and the nation. For more information, visit nsgic.org or email Geospatial Programs Manager Jamie Chesser jamie.chesser@nsgic.org.