Using GIS to Map Government Spending of Tax Dollars in Augusta, GA
Agenda

- Introductions
- City Overview
- SPLOST
- Projects
- The Challenge
- The First Solution
- The NEW Challenge
- Going Forward
City Overview
Founded in 1735
Richmond County Consolidated with the City of Augusta in 1995
Augusta-Richmond County is 329 Square Miles.

≈200,000 Residents
≈571,000 Metro Population
≈ 9,000 Students at Augusta University
Home to the Masters Tournament every April
Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax

SPLOST
Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST)

- 1% sales tax for funding capital projects (penny tax)
- County determines how to use funds
- Projects must benefit the County as a whole
  - Stand alone projects
  - Can combine with State projects
Projects
Current Projects

- SPLOST 6 (approved 2014)
  - 98 projects
- SPLOST 7 (approved 2015)
  - 57 projects
- Stormwater
  - 33 projects
- TIA (Transportation Investment Act)
  - 49 projects

237 total projects currently underway
Types of projects

- City of Blythe and City of Hephzibah
- General Government
  - Bond Administration, CAMA and billing software, etc.
- Infrastructure and Facilities
  - Road Improvements/Widening/Bike Lanes/Safety Improvements, Bridge Repair/Replacement, ADA Sidewalk Installation, Facility Upgrades and Demolition, etc.
- Public Safety
  - Repair/Replace Emergency Vehicles, Construct new Fire Stations, Install new Radio System, etc.
- Quality of Life
  - Parks and Greenspace, Museums, Sports Facilities, Canal, Bus Fleet, etc.
How Informed are you?

- Can you name 10 capital improvement projects in your home town?
- Of the projects you are familiar with...
  - Do you know the project location?
  - Completion date?
  - Budget?
- Providing answers to these questions provides transparency in government spending - our project goal!
The Challenge
Augusta’s Original Challenge

- Create a website that accounts for every dollar spent on SPLOST
- Website must be easy to use
- Website must be created using available resources
- 6 month deadline
Who Is The User?

- Mayor and Commissioners
  - Receive dozens of phone calls each week regarding project status

- Citizens
  - Want to know how tax dollars are being spent
  - Want to know when projects will be complete
The First Solution
Website Development

- Created web solution embedded into our existing City website
  - Used internal developers already employed with the City
- Programming languages used:
  - HTML5, CSS and Javascript
  - SQL and Esri REST services
Creation Challenges

- Find a project list
- Create a project area polygon for each project identified
- Tap into Augusta’s existing GIS database
- Encourage departments to provide initial updates and information
  - Estimated start and completion dates
  - Mayor has requested projects be updated quarterly
- Tie-In financial information
- User friendly and easily searchable
Content Contribution

- Mayor and Commissioners
- Augusta Departments
  - Finance
  - Fire
  - Sheriff
  - Emergency Management
  - Engineering
  - Traffic Engineering
  - Parks and Recreation
  - Planning and Development
  - IT and GIS.
- Departments must provide
  - Initial and quarterly updates.
  - Provide photographs.
Website Completion

- April 1, 2016 - Website is complete and available to Citizens
  [http://appweb2.augustaga.gov/CityWatch/](http://appweb2.augustaga.gov/CityWatch/)
- Overwhelming positive feedback from Citizens
- Began planning version 1.1
  - Add photographs
  - Make site mobile friendly
  - Cosmetic
Museum Asset Management - Infrastructure and Facilities

Description: The Augusta Museum of History is requesting infrastructure funding in two phases. Phase 1) to stabilize an existing property (640 Reynolds Street) to the Museum’s current footprint (560 Reynolds Street), construct a hallway between the property to the building which currently is co-owned by the Museum and the city county, install a freight elevator and to tie in HVAC, fire suppression, and electrical lines into these structures. Phase 2) the Museum’s current wood shop would move to the 540 Reynolds Street property which would create much needed exhibit space to enlarge both the Godfather of Soul, Mr. James Brown exhibition and the Local Legends exhibition. This project would also provide a more attractive streetscape for future economic development projects along and around the 600 and 600 blocks of Reynolds Street.

Phase: General
Department: Augusta Museum of History
Commission District: 1

Recommended Budget: $1,000,000.00
Expanded: $0.00
Funding: SPLOST 7

Narrative:

3/10/2016 General
Approved as part of SPLOST 7 Referendum on November 3, 2015.
How Is The Website Used?

**Mayor and Commissioners**
- In 1 minute or less provide updated project information to Citizens
- Review project list and make decisions about shifting funds
  - Bridge washed out during January floods.
- Review existing projects and make decisions about future projects.

**Citizens**
- Can see where projects are occurring, start/completion dates, budget, review before and after photographs.
Additional Challenges

- Before and After photos
  - Obtain before photos for projects already underway

- Previous SPLOST projects
  - Citizen request
  - Undecided at this time

- Maintaining narratives on website
Website Demo

http://appweb2.augustaga.gov/CW/CityWatch.htm
The NEW Challenge
Additional New Challenges

- **Development Team Staffing**
  - No developer to support or make updates to current page

- **Departmental Cooperation to Receive Updates**
  - Initial budget totals were gathered, but updates on remaining funds are difficult to acquire

- **New Asset Management System created collaboration effort throughout multiple departments for project approval and inspections**
  - This information is not being updated in existing citizen page
Going Forward
Goals

- Use eURLs out of Cityworks Asset Management System to create services which will feed into ArcGIS Online Apps.
  - Saved searches from AMS will provide detail information of the status of projects.

- ArcGIS Online templates are a perfect solution
  - Due to the hiring issues with developers the GIS Team will have the responsibility to replace with Cityworks AMS and AGOL
  - No need for a developer to maintain current webpage
  - Services out of AMS will feed into AGOL Story Maps to display Project Status and provide the citizens with current project status
To be continued...
Questions?
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