



County of Santa Cruz

INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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KENNETH D. WEDDERBURN, DIRECTOR

October 30, 2000

Agenda: November 7, 2000

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, California 95060

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS), INTERNET ACCESS

Dear Members of the Board:

During budget hearings on June 23, 2000 your Board asked that the Information Services Department (ISD) report back regarding GIS information that will be available to the public. The purpose of this letter is to provide that report, including information on cost.

As your Board is aware, the Planning Department is responsible for the Geographic Information System and is responsible for determining how GIS information will be made available to the public and for recommending any related fees for service. The Information Services Department is working closely with Planning to provide technical support in the development of GIS Internet accessibility.

In May 1999 your Board authorized the Planning Department to submit a grant request for the "Livable Communities Public Access grant". This grant was offered by ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute) and IBM Corporation for the purpose of providing public access to mapping information. Successful applicants would be provided equipment and software that would enable publication of maps on the Internet. Later in 1999 the request was granted and soon thereafter the Planning Department, with support from ISD, started work on the initial phase of the project.

The initial phase of development included the Planning Department's implementation of the mapping software, preparation of mapping layers for access by the new system, customization for map presentation, and linkage to tabular property information. The web based map functions were then moved to the County's emerging Intranet environment for testing. In August 2000 these mapping functions were made available to a limited number of County users for beta testing. The beta testing is being performed to allow other non-technical users to work with the web application and identify those changes that would make the system more user friendly for the public. The final phase of the project is to move the application to the County internet server. The Internet server has been ordered and is expected to be available for use in January 2001.

During budget discussions, a concern was expressed regarding the possible loss of revenue when this GIS map function is placed openly on the Internet. The Planning Department believes that making this information available on the Internet will not result in a loss of revenues. The County's original grant application stated that: "The software being granted publishes the GIS data as images, not as "intelligent" maps. Any third party wishing to use the County's GIS to market their products would still need to come to the County to license and pay for the data." The Planning Department anticipates that Internet access will provide meaningful information to the public with fewer visits to the Planning Department freeing staff to provide other services to the public.

In January 2001, ISD is scheduled to return to your Board with a report on the development of Internet and Intranet projects, including services to the public. It is recommended that your Board direct the Planning Department and ISD to include additional information on the status of GIS Internet accessibility in that report.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that your Board:

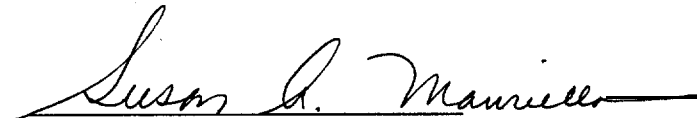
1. Accept and file this report;
2. Direct the Planning Director and the Information Services Director to report back on the first meeting in January 2001, with a further status report on GIS Internet accessibility in conjunction with the report on County Internet and Intranet projects.

Sincerely,



Kenneth D. Wedderburn
Information Services Director

RECOMMENDED:



SUSAN A. MAURIELLO

cc: Alvin James, Planning Director

Gale Conley, GIS Coordinator