

## *Need for a Coordinated Geospatial Program in the Highway Reauthorization Bill*

Each day, the face of America is changing. Based on recent data, consider the following --

In a year with moderate economic activity, there are between 1.2 and 2.3 million new housing starts – that’s 3,288 to 6,300 each day. On a daily basis, 3,013 Americans typically buy a new home and another 18,500 buy an existing house from another citizen. Each year, some 25,000 miles of new roads are built in the United States – that’s 68 miles every day.

Historically, collection of geospatial and related mapping data for transportation has been on an ad-hoc, project-by-project basis. Programs that collect and utilize transportation geospatial data from local, state, regional and federal activities are often done with a single purpose, rather than strategic and long term purposes in mind. In the absence of an effective and organized national program, each level of government continues to duplicate efforts by creating these data to meet only their specific and short term needs. This practice leads to duplicative spending, wasted taxpayer dollars and inefficient government. The true business value of shared transportation geospatial data is only beginning to be realized.

A strategic, coordinated program of national transportation geospatial data, including geodetic control, parcels, orthoimagery, elevation, hydrography, administrative units and transportation (including street networks/road centerline data) could become one of the most widely used geospatial information activities in today’s society. Such an approach would not only accelerate project delivery (saving time and money), but enhance the ability to build roads, rail and other surface transportation projects with less impact on the environment. Furthermore, such data supports operation and maintenance of transportation systems, E-911 dispatching, emergency response, asset management, permitting, right-of-way management, corridor analysis, intelligent transportation systems and automated vehicle routing and location systems.

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) has recommended that transportation organizations leverage geospatial information and tools by building and maintaining different relationships and enabling new and creative ways to do business, implementing a new model for development and use of geospatial information by the transportation system. Widespread use of geospatial data in a systematic way could be achieved through a focused alliance and collaboration among public, private and academic communities, recognizing that the role of federal agencies is to enable state and local agencies and the private sector to carry out their missions, solicit data from data owners and providers and to encourage data sharing among agencies, users, and decision makers.

### **ACTION REQUESTED:**

**MAPPS respectfully urges members of Congress to include provisions in SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization that will fully implement the call for coordinated transportation data for the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) required by Executive Order 12906, and create an innovative public-private partnership that recognizes the critical role that all stakeholders can and should play in providing best available transportation data, including commercially available services and data products from the private sector. For more information, contact John Byrd, MAPPS Government Affairs Manager, at [jbyrd@mapps.org](mailto:jbyrd@mapps.org) or 703-787-6996.**