AIMS Engineering Focus Group Minutes
Hosted by Johnson County AIMS @ Sunset Drive Office Building
October 25, 2007

Representatives were present from the firms of: Schalgel and Associates, BWR, HNTB, Davidson Brown, Ponzer-Youngquist, Payne and Brockway, and Schafer, Kline and Warren.
Also present were representatives from WaterOne, Johnson County Wastewater, Public Works, Records and Taxation, and AIMS.

Data Development

The first portion of this meeting was focused on issues surrounding AIMS data. Shannon Porter discussed the current status of AIMS planimetric updates and upcoming 2008 orthophotography. The new orthos will be flown in the spring and should be available on the same type of delivery schedule as the 2006 photos. Planimetric updates are currently in progress and will not be available as early as originally planned as AIMS is still waiting on delivery estimates from the vendor (Optimal Geomatics). Attendees expressed some interest in being able to access the preliminary contours and also requested that AIMS include X,Y, and Z as attributes with spot heights as users are currently only getting this as an annotation.

> To see the Microsoft PowerPoint presentation that accompanied Shannon's presentation, see http://aims.jocogov.org/resources/mtgnotes/presentations/2007/Oct/LIDAR_Plani2007.ppt

Shannon continued with a demonstration of AIMS' LiDAR data. Of those attending the meeting, three or four noted that they had requested LiDAR, but have not used it beyond simply viewing the images. Shannon presented the various links on the AIMS website that provide more information on LiDAR and how to use it. When preparing to demonstrate, it was noted that using the LiDAR data in AutoCAD requires having the Land Development desktop, if using any version prior to 2008. It was also determined that majority of the attendees are currently using AutoCAD 2008 Civil or are in the process of converting to it, which includes the Land Development tools. Attendees inquired whether AIMS could provide the LiDAR data an alternate format to XYZ. AIMS will research the options of delivering this data in both XYZ and Shape file formats through DDR.

> To see the Microsoft PowerPoint presentation that accompanied Shannon's presentation, see http://aims.jocogov.org/resources/mtgnotes/presentations/2007/Oct/LIDAR_possibleUses.ppt

The last element discussed within Data Development was the FEMA/Flood Plain application. Peter Maynard-Moody introduced the application and discussed its current and future availability. While currently only available to internal county employees and individual cities, this application should be made public once all cities have had their public meetings and approved the data, which is set to be completed within the next 3-4 months. Kent Lage also indictated the possibility of masking those cities who have not yet approved the data and allowing access to engineering firms to those areas already approved.

> To see the Microsoft PowerPoint presentation that accompanied Peter's presentation, see http://aims.jocogov.org/resources/mtgnotes/presentations/2007/Oct/FEMA.ppt

AIMS Service Modifications

Updates to several AIMS services were discussed during the second phase of the meeting.

Dan Steen introduced the changes to the website following the new launch in early September. Some highlights of the updated site include the addition of the myAIMS login from the homepage, the Quick links and Quick map features and myMaps within the myAIMS login. Also noted were the updates made to the metadata section which can be displayed in a classic view or in a Frequently Asked Questions type of format. There are also new display methods available for plats and annexations which include shape file links and thumbnail images of the properties. Any comments or suggestions for further enhancements were encouraged.

Shannon Porter followed with a presentation on a relatively new addition to AIMS' CreateMapPDF, known as a GeoPDF. This new format allows users to request pdf files that include the ability to see different layers and attribute information without the need for GIS software. There were three or four attendees who were aware of this product, but few had used it. Shannon discussed the benefits of using a GeoPDF and how it could be helpful for field work. A demonstration of how to create one and some of the various features found within it was then presented. Attendees expressed significant interest in this tool and agreed that it would be very beneficial for field work or possibly in permitting applications. It was asked if this could be a possible replacement for CUEView once utility information is added, but since the pdf is not updateable, it would not be a valuable substitute for CUEView.

To see the Microsoft PowerPoint presentation that accompanied Peter's presentation, see http://aims.jocogov.org/resources/mtgnotes/presentations/2007/Oct/GeoPDF_CreateMapPDF.ppt

CreateMapPDF, along with Plat Viewer, JCLR and CUEView, is available only by subscription. Jay Heermann followed Shannon's presentation of GeoPDF by explaining the myAIMS Subscription service for these four applications. While these services have been somewhat restricted in the past, they will soon be rolled out to a broader audience, via subscription. Attendees were encouraged to contact either Jay or Traci Robinson for more information on obtaining a subscription. The attached handout also details these subscription services.

The last topic for this portion of the meeting was a discussion on some possible changes to DDR and some of the recent issues with downloading and using the data from AIMS. Keith Shaw touched on some of the issues that have been brought the to attention of the AIMS staff regarding slow drawing times within AutoCAD, large file sizes causing AutoCAD to crash while importing, and clean up work that is sometimes needed by the user when working with AIMS DDR files. Some proposed changes were discussed, but attendees indicated no immediate need for change. Currently, it seems that there are no major issues revolving around DDR download. It was noted that when requesting the property layer, the request extent comes in and has to be removed by exploding property and removing linework, adding additional work by the end user. It was suggested that request extent be put on it's own layer. A quick survey of the group revealed that most, if not all, attendees are accessing DDR through their myAIMS logins rather than through individual cities or utility groups.

To see the Microsoft PowerPoint presentation that accompanied Keith's presentation, see http://aims.jocogov.org/resources/mtgnotes/presentations/2007/Oct/ProposedDDRChanges.ppt

Improving Communication within the Land Development Life Cycle

The final portion of this meeting focused on the land development life cycle and how the development community and AIMS can better work together to make it a smoother process.

Peter Maynard-Moody began by discussing the overall Land Development Life Cycle, focusing more specifically on preliminary planning and future land use issues. Currently, AIMS is working with the city of Gardner to start this process and is hoping to get a few more small cities to join in a pilot project. All attendees were in strong agreement that it would be very beneficial if AIMS could get involved and provide preliminary planning and future land use information. Most in the development community currently go directly to the cities to get information about future plans, if they have it available. Kathleen Murphy with Waterone also inquired about the possibility of having one location where files could be uploaded, reviewed, and made available to others (e.g., prelim plats, rezoning, annexations, etc). With the development community being so immediately involved in the preliminary stages, AIMS proposed the notion of obtaining initial plans directly from those in the engineering community. While this was perceived as a viable option, it was noted that the Engineering firms would only be able to provide these as long as some security measures were put in place (e.g., PDF's and tif's would be more likely than DWG files) and no additional time or cost would be associated with the process. It was also mentioned that preliminary engineering plans do not always depict the final product; often what is built was not the original plan.

Along with preliminary planning comes the permitting process. All attendees were in unanimous agreement that it would be very beneficial if this process could be standardized, with AIMS' assistance. AIMS would like to work as a facilitator between the engineering community and the cities to create a standard process and provide a tool for supplying the necessary information for obtaining proper permits. To this end, Tom Audley from the Records and Taxation office spoke briefly on the need for everyone to use the guidelines found on the AIMS website (http://aims.jocogov.org/documents/cadspec.pdf) for plat submittals in an effort to make this a more uniform process.

> To see the Microsoft PowerPoint presentation that accompanied Peter's presentation, see http://aims.jocogov.org/resources/mtgnotes/presentations/2007/Oct/LDLC.ppt

To close the meeting, Keith Shaw presented a demonstration of using ArcGIS in AutoCAD. While this is still in the initial stages of development and AIMS is in the initial stages of utilizing it, this could be a valuable step in the integration of GIS and CAD design. Some of the benefits and features of this tool were discussed, along with some of the issues and bugs that have arisen and will need to be addressed such as, security via login and speed of the system. By accessing this through ArcServer services, users would eliminate the need to store data on their local machine as well as have access to the most current data without the need to download new files. When gauging interest in this from the group, the main concern mentioned was the increased use of bandwidth by accessing this through the AIMS Server. However, the lack of storage and the currency of the data do still make this a promising advancement. Organizing a future test group for this product may be a promising subsequent step.

> To see the Microsoft PowerPoint presentation that accompanied Keith's presentation, see http://aims.jocogov.org/resources/mtgnotes/presentations/2007/Oct/ArcGIS_AutoCAD.ppt