

GEOWORLD CASE STUDY:

GIS Technology Blasts Off on the Space Coast

City of Titusville, Florida

3—2—1 Blastoff! The City of Titusville is taking off, exploring a new frontier it hasn't yet experienced—Geographic Information Systems.

The oldest community on the Indian River, the City of Titusville, Florida, is immersed in a rich history. Residents are constantly reminded of the City's early industries, such as commercial fishing and citrus agriculture. Although the historic features of the laid back City are ever-present, Titusville is growing and making technological advancements every day.

Commonly known as part of the space coast, Titusville is home to the U.S. Space Walk of Fame and is a stone's throw from the Kennedy Space Center, making the City home to some of the most tech savvy citizens in the nation. Many of the residents work at the Kennedy Space Center and are highly involved with technological advancements in the region.

This informed group of citizens is excited about the emerging technology. "Our residents and City Council members are technologically

astute, so we always try to know what we're talking about," said Rick Story, MIS Director at the City of Titusville.

The Mayor of Titusville is excited about the technological advancement and is keeping Story on his toes. "He will walk into my office and talk about technology, comparing the City to the Kennedy Space Center."

All of the excitement for GIS makes it surprising that up until recently, Titusville had no GIS in place.

"Previously, we would go to the county website to get whatever maps we needed, and we were



making due," said Story. "The City didn't have anyone on staff qualified to just take on the project of implementing a GIS. They tried to undertake the project twice before, but it didn't go anywhere either time. We needed direction."

The City assembled a committee of representatives from several departments, and they initiated a Request for Proposal (RFP). After taking into consideration each response to the RFP, the City chose Geographic Technologies Group (GTG) to create a GIS Strategic Plan. "GTG was truly the only company that the committee agreed on unanimously," said Story. "They offered the best presentation and the best price."

Although the plan was put into effect very recently, Story said that progress is already being made. "The plan is allowing us to bring all of the departments together to start communicating and sharing data. What one department has may help another department. Before, we had individuals who had pieces of data, but now, data is being shared. It's great."

The people of Titusville are welcoming the much



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anticipated GIS technology. “The citizens who attend council meetings are glad to see us moving in this direction,” said Story. With 44,000 residents, it’s common for the City to receive complaints about projects, such as road maintenance or construction. However, there has not been any negativity concerning the City’s GIS initiative. “Nobody has had negative comments about this project because they realize what a positive effect these advancements can have.”

With the continuous support of citizens and committee members, Story says he’s hopeful of what GIS will offer the City’s future. “It’s going to make the jobs of City employees much easier. We’ll have better street boundaries, centerlines, water infrastructure, and things of that nature.”

Not only will the development of GIS improve City employees’ jobs, but citizens are sure to feel the effects as well. “Citizens will be able to go online and know about what’s going on in the community.” They’ll be able to pinpoint crime hotspots, where burglaries have occurred in the past, and where fires have taken place. They’ll also be able to use GIS to find other information, such as where parks are located and to which voting precinct they are assigned.

Story said that working with GTG on the project has been nothing but a positive experience. “They’re very knowledgeable and spend extra time to go out of their way to explain everything. I’m not



a GIS person, and I’ve never worked with it until now. They are very helpful in explaining everything thoroughly.”

With the support of citizens and the experience of GTG, GIS advancement in Titusville is blasting off to endless possibilities! ●

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