



National States Geographic Information Council

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Criteria for initiatives that are intended to be termed “FOR THE NATION”

The following guidance is for NSGIC member use in the creation of national spatial data infrastructure (NSDI) initiatives that are intended to be termed “*For the Nation*.” This guidance is based on our successful experience with the Imagery for the Nation program and offers a solid foundation on which to build similar initiatives. These criteria should also be used internally to evaluate new “*For the Nation*” projects initiated by other organizations or agencies that are requesting NSGIC support. The following criteria shall be met:

CONCEPT STAGE

- A custodial organization and key individuals must be clearly identified to serve as the point of contact for others seeking information on the initiative.
- The proposed development of a data layer, service, or application must be clearly defined, including a vision statement that articulates the goal of the initiative.
- The initiative must ensure national coverage at full implementation. Differences in the design due to geographic, urban v. rural, demographic, or other considerations should be clearly articulated with stakeholder consensus.
- The initiative should be designed to meet the multiple business needs of all levels of government. If there are reasons that multiple business needs can not be met, they should be clearly articulated with stakeholder consensus.
- Affected stakeholder communities for the initiative must be involved in development of the concept.
- A Strategic Plan must be developed in concert with all stakeholder communities.

DEVELOPMENT STAGE

- Each component of the initiative must be clearly defined.
- The effort must include “buy-up” options to increase flexibility for the entire community where applicable.
- Technical specifications must be designed to meet the highest accuracy or functional requirements of the broadest community possible.
- Technical specifications must allow for multiple technological solutions and the ability to take advantage of future technologies. (Performance driven instead of technology driven).
- A maintenance plan and process must be defined as part of the effort.
- Dedicated, capable, and willing long term custodians or data stewards must be identified.
- Data distribution and archive mechanism must be identified where appropriate.

- A full Cost Benefit Analysis should be conducted to clearly demonstrate the value of the initiative, justify funding and demonstrate taxpayer savings.
- A complete Business Plan must be developed that identifies each of the implementation procedures that will be required for a successful project.
- A sustainable funding plan for the effort must be identified that allows for multiple funding sources.

- **IMPLEMENTATION STAGE**

- The effort must provide for governance and adjudicatory procedures that allow for reasonable variations in implementation steps and technical specifications to support changing needs, budgetary issues, geographic differences, and other considerations.
- The effort must allow for differing management options for development and maintenance that include federal, state, regional, and local approaches.
- Regular meetings of the governance and implementation groups must be conducted at least semi-annually and provide for participation by all affected stakeholder communities.
- The governance and implementation groups must conduct bi-annual reviews of their strategic and business plans to bring them up-to-date, or conduct new planning efforts as appropriate.