



## Information Resource Exchange Group Highlights

*Wednesday, December 10, 2014*

The 93<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Information Resource Exchange Group (IREG) was called to order at the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's office by Jason Miller, Burlington County Bridge Commission, and IREG Chair. Thirty-nine people were in attendance. Highlights from the September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting were available as a handout and on the internet.

### **Key Points**

- Open Data policies benefit governments, inter-agency and departmental communication, and civic engagement
- Facilitating public access to information requires user-friendly and intuitive functionality
- Transparent data provides an interface to query fixed data sets while open data provides free and customizable data downloads
- Civic engagement can be richly rewarding for organizations with limited resources by enabling interested parties to perform data analysis and representation

### **Presentations**

**Open Data: Beyond Transparency & Accountability** – Tim Wisniewski, Chief Data Officer, and Stacey Mosley, Data Services Manager, from the City of Philadelphia, explained Philadelphia's implementation of Mayor Nutter's Open Data Executive Order. An improvement over the cumbersome Right-To-Know request process, Philadelphia provides discrete data sets from each city department and continues to increase the available information. The Office of Innovation and Technology defines metrics for the success of the initiative in order to efficiently facilitate data access and prioritize data releases based on demand. An Open Data Advisory Group provides oversight of the release of department data along with a data coordinator from each department to ensure the validity, security, and quality of information. Effectively identifying consumers and producers of city information and providing quality tools for the automation of its release and access improves business processes and efficiency. City of Philadelphia data can be accessed at <http://phila.gov/data>.

**New Jersey Open Data & GIS Applications** – Sean McGinnis, IT Specialist, New Jersey Office of GIS, overviewed the history of GIS at the state level and illustrated the current process for delivering data and analysis tools to member governments and the public. New Jersey has provided a level of transparency for many years, but a recent focus on open data has reoriented the efforts from providing data tools to providing data access. Platforms such as ArcGIS Online provide a proven way to disseminate information in a variety of formats based on what the user wants instead of how the data is represented. The Office of GIS implemented automated

processes to replicate the data stored in state-level enterprise databases online in an accessible format that does not require extensive development. Lowering the barriers to publishing data benefits both the organization, who can use resources more efficiently, and users, who can receive the information desired faster. New Jersey's Open Data GIS information can be found at <http://newjersey.maps.arcgis.com>.

### **Information Items**

- DVRPC recently released “Data Snapshots 2.2 – Regional Economics: Regional Economic Cluster Analysis”
- DVRPC staff are continuing to work with USGS on the 2015 Aerial Imagery project
- DVRPC is working on a refresh of our website, to coincide with our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration in 2015.

**The next scheduled IREG meeting is Wednesday, March 11th, 2015.**

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