



North Central Texas Council Of Governments

Memorandum

TO: County Judges and Officials, City Managers,
Planning Directors

DATE: June 14, 2012

FROM: Mike Eastland
Executive Director

SUBJECT: Regional Data Cooperative Purchase Program

The Research and Information Services Department of the North Central Texas Council of Governments collects, stores, maintains, updates and conducts quality control activities on data used individually by entities across the region and for regional projects. It is used extensively by entities for a variety of purposes as evidenced by the calls we regularly receive to discuss the data, inquire as to the timing of the next update and ask our assistance interpreting or analyzing it. For example, local governments use the data for transportation planning, environmental analysis, economic development, and other areas. Development, maintenance, and support of these data have long been a priority for RIS. However, as a result of recent federal and state funding cuts, RIS will not be able to continue providing these services at no cost and may have to eliminate some.

Since 2001, NCTCOG has coordinated cooperative cost sharing of digital aerial photography. Participants in the digital aerial cooperative program enjoy an average saving of 75% compared to purchasing aerial imagery individually. Similar efficiencies can translate into savings in the area of data production. As with the aerial program, it would be prohibitively expensive for every entity that needs the data provided by RIS to complete the required activities individually. Therefore, it is important to make the data that is used regularly by entities around the region available using a more effective method. Based on the success of the aerial program, we believe the best way to continue to make this data available is through a similar cooperative purchase program. The goal of the cooperative purchase this year is to augment the funding for the data program, which still has some federal and state funding although that funding is expected to continue to decline.

NCTCOG Cooperative Data Program Components and Content

A data program that provides accurate and useful data includes:

- Identification of data sources;
- Data gathering, processing, and maintenance;
- Quality control and quality assurance;
- Database design;
- Hardware and software selection, acquisition, and maintenance;
- Application development to provide data access;
- Process and methodology development and documentation; and
- Development of reports and analytical products.

Specific data and services to be included in the NCTCOG cooperative data program are:

- **GIS Data Clearinghouse** – website providing download of GIS files including census geographies, current city boundaries, major developments and features, ISD boundaries, land use, ZIP codes, and legislative boundaries, etc.
- **Land Use** – inventory of land based on use such as residential, commercial and industrial. This information is typically updated every five years.
- **Census Data** – processed decennial census and American Community Survey data including characteristics such as race, age, income, household type, and educational attainment. This information will be available as formatted profile reports and in Excel spreadsheets or other downloadable formats.
- **Development Monitoring** – identification and tracking of developments with at least 80,000 sq feet or 80 employees on site. Also included are all public schools and multi-family housing developments with at least 80 units. Updated continually.
- **Population Estimates** – annual, current-year population and housing estimates for cities and counties.
- **Small-area Estimates** – estimates of population and jobs by industry sector for sub-county planning areas like ZIP codes or census tracts. Updated annually, but lagged by two years.
- **Technical Assistance** – responses to a variety of inquiries by phone and email.
- **Continuous data access** – web-based interface allowing access to the data at the time and from the location(s) most convenient to you.

Participants in the cooperative data program will provide support on an annual basis with the amount depending on each participant's size. The proposed fee structure presented below provides supplemental funding for staff, hardware, software and other expenses required to support the most significant and widely-used programs.

Organization Description (Population)	Annual Fee (\$)
Cities	
500,000 and higher	7,000
100,000 – 499,999	6,000
50,000 – 99,999	5,000
25,000 – 49,999	4,000
10,000 – 24,999	3,000
5,000 – 9,999	2,000
1,000 – 4,999	1,000
Less than 1,000	500
Counties	
750,000 and higher	5,000
100,000 – 750,000	4,000
Less than 100,000	3,000
Other Organizations	
DFW Airport	7,000
Special Districts	4,000
Private Sector Organizations	7,500

Your Role

We need to know the level of funding that will be available moving forward for these programs. If your entity is willing to participate by allocating funds according to the schedule presented above, please respond to Donna or Tim at their e-mail address presented below by July 15, 2012. We will accumulate the responses and contact you with the plan for moving forward with this program based on the participation indicated. If the responses provide the funding required, we will indicate that; otherwise we will move toward eliminating data collection, maintenance and update efforts. If you have any questions that you need answered prior to responding, please feel free to contact Donna or Tim.

Donna Coggeshall, Research Manager

817.695.9168

dcoggeshall@nctcog.org

Tim Barbee, CIO

817.695.9158

tbarbee@nctcog.org