

City of Greensboro, NC

QUICK FACTS:

With more than 113 square miles,
Greensboro includes:

> 1,100 miles of roadway

> 1,470 miles of water mains

> 1,400 miles of sanitary sewers

> 87,000 water meters

Background

Home to 213,000 citizens, the City of Greensboro, North Carolina honors its motto to provide “excellence in service.” Achieving and maintaining such excellence is not an easy task, however, particularly with the vast number of resources and facilities to support. For example, with more than 113 square miles, Greensboro has thousands of miles of roadways, water and sewer mains, and tens of thousands of water meters, street signs, and addresses.

The City’s government manages all of these assets—and that’s just the beginning. It also supports Greensboro’s numerous community facilities, including 16 fire stations and more than 3,100 parks and beautification areas, just to name a few. The City’s ability to support these resources directly impacts the quality of service, which in turn affects the day-to-day lives of Greensboro citizens.

The Goal

In the quest to fulfill the City’s mission to provide “excellence in service,” local government officials sought to give citizens a single “one-stop-shop” resource, such as a telephone number or a website for all government-related requests and inquiries. This would allow Greensboro to better address the needs of its citizens, streamline operations, and simplify access to critical information by integrating data into one, centralized system.

Challenges

But this “one-system” approach presented a number of challenges, as every facility, department, and organization maintained their own separate work order systems. These separate systems prevented organizations from sharing and retrieving information easily and presented serious integration issues. Another common challenge that municipalities face is tracking their widely dispersed assets. Frequently only the asset’s location, rather than a part or serial number, makes it unique and is therefore difficult to find in a database or other automated system. Greensboro needed a way to track the city’s assets—like street segments, traffic lights, and sewer lines—by physical location.

Greensboro, like other government agencies, must comply with regulatory requirements, such as Capacity, Management, Operation and Maintenance (CMOM) and the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB). CMOM sets standards and regulations for the proper management, operation, and maintenance of government facilities and equipment, while GASB requires governments to account for and report their capital asset activity.

Plus, there were budgetary constraints. Developing such a system would cost money, and North Carolina requires municipalities to operate with balanced budgets.



Solution

Greensboro sought to implement an integrated technology based solution that combines asset management, customer relationship management, and geographic information systems (GIS) to help achieve its goal of providing quality service. The City turned to Datastream 7i, Infor's asset performance management solution, to serve as the foundation for this initiative. Over 1,200 cities, municipalities, departments, and government agencies in the U.S. rely on Infor EAM software and services, making Datastream 7i an ideal fit for Greensboro.

Together with ESRI and the Datastream 7i team, Greensboro designed, developed, and implemented a system that will successfully accomplish Greensboro's "single-source" goal.

The new solution will tie together nearly every Greensboro operating department function: Transportation, Solid Waste Management, Storm Water Management, Water and Sewer, Parks and Recreation, Building and Facilities Management, and Coliseum Operation, to name a few. This gives officials one, easy-to-use system to manage a wide range of government operations, such as snow removal, traffic signal maintenance, water conservation, landscape management, emergency vehicle maintenance, and event support. This multi-phase implementation began with Transportation and Storm Water, and then rolled out to Solid Waste with the other agencies following—the end result being a single, consolidated system that offers a common view of all relevant data.

"With an integrated solution, our staff will have everything they need right at their fingertips to immediately address the needs and concerns of Greensboro citizens," says Michael Cramer, Business/Parking Division Manager for Greensboro's Department of Transportation. "And it gives us the flexibility to tailor the system to meet our specific needs and requirements as they exist today and as they change over time."

Greensboro citizens can contact a single call center to get their questions answered or to report a particular issue—a broken street lamp, a water main problem, a pothole, or any other concerns. With the new integration of asset, geographic, and citizen information, call center operators have a consolidated, browser-based view of all the data necessary to assist the caller. And because the calls come into one centralized location, they can be effectively dispatched, monitored, and analyzed, helping the City address the issues quickly.

"Our integration of the call center and GIS with Datastream 7i was made possible through the use of the Web Services Toolkit. It has enabled us to write an application that answers our needs for both customer contact management and asset management and leverages the power of GIS to locate assets and analyze service trends," says Stephen Sherman, Greensboro's GIS Manager. Plus, when operations managers receive a work request through the call center, directly from a citizen, or from a crew in the field, they can look up the asset and assign a crew using nothing more than a street address. Workers can also look to see if there's a crew in the area and assign them to make the repair.



“Through its GIS capability, Datastream 7i provides a simple ‘point and click’ way to identify the location of assets, as well as each asset’s complete maintenance history. This enables us to resolve issues much more quickly and cost effectively than ever before, while also capturing all of the associated costs,” says Sherman.

Results

With the help of Datastream 7i, the City of Greensboro expects to greatly improve efficiencies, reduce administrative costs, and optimize productivity. In addition, with a system to track and manage assets effectively, Greensboro anticipates meeting GASB and CMOM requirements by providing clear, accurate details regarding the state of operations and the status of assets. But above all, government officials believe this system will provide the necessary infrastructure to guarantee the service excellence promised to the citizens of Greensboro.



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