We appreciate your organization’s Government Agency membership in URISA. Hopefully, your team is taking full advantage of their individual membership benefits and your organization has benefited from the annual opportunity to license a URISA Certified Workshop, in addition to the substantial team discount for the GIS-Pro conference. Beginning in 2020, we plan to augment the agency membership package by offering participation in a URISA-administered, online GIS Managers’ community.

I did want to announce to you the end of the GIS Management Institute. One of the most important tasks of the Board of Directors is to constantly evaluate all of URISA’s programs to ensure we are providing the best opportunities for our members to reach their top potential. When the GIS Management Institute (GMI) was created, the original intent was to provide a comprehensive program that would facilitate and support GIS managers with the online GIS Capability Maturity Model and several more initiatives to help organizations with their GIS management operations. These include:

- Development of GIS Management Best Practices and Body of Knowledge
- GIS Management-related professional education (GIS Leadership Academy and a robust GIS Leadership & Management program track at GIS-Pro each year)
- Expansion of GIS Management information dissemination
- Promotion of awareness and adoption of GIS management best practices by organizations and GIS professionals

As the GMI was evaluated this year, the Board realized that the online GISCMM was not being utilized by many members or providing the value originally intended. The GMI, as a free-standing program within URISA, never achieved the energy level originally anticipated and was proving cumbersome to manage as a separate entity within the organization.

At the June Board of Director’s meeting, it was decided to discontinue the GMI as it currently exists. We are not getting rid of the program. Instead, we are realigning the best aspects of the GMI under other URISA committees that we are confident will bring them to their full potential. This action will prevent any overlap of similar efforts and ensure consistency across URISA programs.

As part of our commitment to supporting GIS management professionals we are also creating a successor program to the GIS Leadership Academy that will have a management focus. In addition, we are acquiring software that will allow us to create online communities of professionals facing common challenges. One of the first communities we will establish is for GIS Managers. Our goal is to connect managers with a community of their peers where they can share their challenges and triumphs and learn from each other year around!

The GIS Capability Maturity Model will also still be available as a spreadsheet (though the online version will be retired by the end of 2019). You are also encouraged to try other maturity models and bring your experience back to the GIS Managers’ Community so that, over time, you may help craft a hybrid of several models that work better for your particular circumstances.
While the GMI will cease to exist in its current state, I want to assure you that we are committed to offering a comprehensive and responsive program to support GIS managers and their teams. I hope you can make it to GIS-Pro 2019 in New Orleans, we have some great things coming down the pike!

Sincerely,
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