



Nova Scotia Civic Address File Strategy

2010 – 2015

PURPOSE

This five year strategy focuses specifically on the Nova Scotia Civic Address File (NSCAF) Program, a responsibility of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. The NSCAF Program consists exclusively of the business facets of building, maintaining, and distributing location-based addressing for the Province of Nova Scotia. The NSCAF Program plays an integral role in Nova Scotia's civic addressing system.

BACKGROUND

Civic addressing is more than community names, street signs numbers on houses, or a database of civic addresses. It is a complex system that involves the public, municipalities, First Nations communities, government departments, emergency response agencies, and telephone service providers; and is used for everything from pizza delivery, emergency response, bus routing, to elections.

In 1997, the GeoNOVA Advisory Committee identified the need for a province-wide electronic, geo-referenced civic address database, referred to as the Nova Scotia Civic Address File (NSCAF). The NSCAF would provide a standard, geo-referenced electronic database of civic addresses province wide and a supporting maintenance strategy.

The province proceeded to develop a technical concept and strategy for the creation of the NSCAF that would support the delivery of emergency services as well as other business requirements. This concept and resulting strategy were based on principles of maximizing the use of existing provincial and municipal data, so that the NSCAF would be developed and maintained as cost effectively as possible. Data has been collected once at source and managed in a single environment. This efficient approach offers a single distribution point to all groups and agencies for NSCAF information as well as a centralized feedback system for improving data quality.

The NSCAF would comprise:

- a digital road centreline file
- a geographically referenced civic address point file
- a community boundary layer
- a maintenance process

CURRENT SITUATION

The success of the NSCAF Program and the larger civic addressing system it supports to date has to be credited to the efforts of many people and agencies. Municipalities and First Nations communities from across the province have been instrumental in helping

build and maintain the electronic civic address database. There has also been considerable effort by Emergency Management Office (EMO), Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) and Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (SNSMR) staff in building and supporting the NSCAF. It is recognized that the overall long term success of the NSCAF is in the partnerships established with municipalities, First Nations, and provincial government departments and agencies ensuring that geographic data representing new roads, civic numbers and community boundaries are kept up to date.

As previously mentioned, the NSCAF Program is only one component of Nova Scotia's civic address system. The steps taken to build the overall system have involved several initiatives including (but not limited to) legislation, by-laws, road signage, civic number signage, as well as NSCAF related activities. These efforts required extensive cooperation between many stakeholders throughout the Province. The public also has a primary responsibility to ensure that their civic numbers are posted. All of these components are required for the system to function.

Over time, the NSCAF Program has gradually broadened its scope. Routing, reconciliation with other geographic data products, street name reconciliation, GPS units and training for municipalities, associated GIS applications are a few examples of how the Program has evolved since its inception.

THE APPROACH

The NSCAF component of Nova Scotia civic addressing has increased in importance, scope and demand since the initial vision from 1997. The effort documented here is the result of a direction given by the GeoNOVA Steering Committee to examine and document a Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relation's perspective for the strategic direction of location based addressing in the Province of Nova Scotia over the next five years. This direction refers specifically to the NSCAF component of the civic addressing system.

To accomplish this task, a SNSMR working group (see Appendix A for a list of members) crafted a revised vision, mission, strategic priorities, along with supporting initiatives and tasks. To clarify the process and the results, the following defines the framework the working group used throughout the process.

Vision

When discussing the Vision, it was often reiterated that this is where one sees the NSCAF Program at the end of the five year period. All other elements of the strategic plan framework must support the program's chosen vision.

Mission

The purpose of the mission statement in the framework used by the working group was to establish and state the operational commitment required to fulfil and sustain the selected vision. Our mission statement is an action statement, outlining succinctly what it will mean operationally to SNSMR and its partners to successfully achieve the vision.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles represent our core values and reflect the conduct, professionalism, and integrity of all staff affiliated with the NSCAF Program.

Strategic Priorities

Our strategic priorities reflect the pillars of the NSCAF Program that will ultimately enable us to achieve the program's vision. All NSCAF related activities in the future must align to at least one strategic priority for the program.

Major Initiatives

Our major initiatives represent a catalogue of essential projects that have been identified in order for the NSCAF Program to achieve the strategic priorities.

Identified Tasks

The identified efforts are low-level, but key tasks and in some cases they are standalone projects. They support the progress of the major initiatives and assist in deciding what resources are required to complete much of the anticipated work over the five-year period of the strategic plan. These activities form a non-exhaustive list of tasks that could form a large part of future NSCAF Program workplans.

The following sections represent the final outcome of the SNSMR working group.

VISION

One common electronic representation of location-based addresses for Nova Scotia. Current, accurate, and always available.

MISSION

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations' mission is to build, maintain and distribute a common electronic representation of location-based addresses. We are driven by a commitment to enhance government decision-making and support citizen services in an efficient and cost effective manner.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles guided the exercise of articulating the NSCAF Program's strategy for the next five years.

Quality of Service

- A leader in client focused, service delivery
- Accessible and easy to interact with

Working Together

- A partner in the provision of information and access to services for stakeholders and users
- A government service and information provider offering a flexible range of service delivery support services
- Ensure that this electronic addressing strategy for the Province meets the expectations of the greater, province-wide civic addressing system

Whole of Government View

- A team player, supporting a greater, province-wide civic addressing system
- A willing partner in stream lining access to government information and services

Accountability

- A strong administrator of public interest and safety
- A source of high quality information and services that protect both stakeholder and user interests
- Efficient and cost effective
- Accountable for results

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Guarantee that Location-based addressing is available
- Integrate location-based addressing into government services
- Strengthening partnerships
- Improve data quality
- Provide quality support and services for data custodians and users

It is important to recognise that the NSCAF Program has been in place for approximately ten years and that many activities that could be categorized under these newly articulated strategic priorities have already begun. Some of strategic priorities will be completed before the end of the current five-year vision while others will have supporting initiatives and projects covering the entire strategic plan's period.

Availability

Guaranteeing that location-based addressing is available, specifically through technical infrastructure deals principally with ensuring that the proper IT components are in place, providing the reliable technology backbone that will deliver NSCAF products and services. Working with IT partners to analyse the requirements for this critical infrastructure will produce long term dividends for the NSCAF Program and its users.

Integration

One of the more recent directions for the NSCAF program has been *integrating location-based addresses into government services* to support government decision-making. Specifically, the concept of integrating geography in the form of addressing into traditionally non-spatial business systems will improve data integrity for these business areas. This is considered a tremendous opportunity for the geomatics community to have a strong positive impact in what could be considered more mainstream information management systems. It is widely expected that this concept of geomatics integration will witness substantial application growth over the next five to ten years.

Partnerships

Authoritative addressing in Nova Scotia is only as strong and reliable as the partnership model that provides the fabric of the NSCAF Program. *Strengthening partnerships* is considered to be a core and vital ongoing function of the NSCAF Program. Collaboration with partners is a required continual process that offers the program its sustainability. If partnerships with NSCAF data providers breaks down, its impact is felt across all strategic priorities and the vision becomes threatened.

Data Quality

Increased demands for access to current addressing information have increased the requirement for *improving data quality*. As the recognized de facto authoritative source for Nova Scotia addressing, the NSCAF has become a victim of its own success. The heavy interest in integrating addressing into business systems along with increased awareness of the available products from more traditional geomatics users have placed new levels of demand for quality data that our public sector geomatics professionals have ever previously witnessed. To be able to continue to supply quality data products, the NSCAF Program must set and publish reasonable data quality standards. Data-related policies and standards such as changes to the NSCAF data model, mandatory fields, geographic accuracy, etc cannot be established in isolation, they must be developed both from a data custodian's perspective and based upon a data users/consumers need. These standards must be achievable by the Program's data providers and acceptable to those who use the data.

Service and Support

Quality support and services for data custodians and users is an important aspect for successfully achieving the NSCAF Program's strategy. Publishing standards for data quality, committing to integrating electronic addressing into other business systems, and ensuring availability are key business drivers for providing data custodians and users with an enhanced support structure. Providing support that may include a service centre for direct contact from data providers and users will be an important link for ensuring data provider engagement and that clients are using the NSCAF data properly.

MAJOR INITIATIVES,

by strategic priority

Eighteen major initiatives were identified in order to successfully implement the Five-year NSCAF strategic plan. Additionally, high level tasks were identified in order to support the initiatives listed below.

These initiatives were aligned to the strategic priorities as follows:

1. Guarantee that location-based addressing is accessible through infrastructure.

1. Define geomatics infrastructure and architectural requirements
2. Acquire and Implement geomatics infrastructure

2. Integrate location-based addresses into government services to support government decision-making.

1. Communicate benefits of NSCAF Strategy to the Government of Nova Scotia's IT/IM and Business leaders
2. Design, build, or enhance systems for accessing the data
3. Implement a corporate Government of Nova Scotia address data standard

3. Strengthening partnerships

1. Strengthen partnership model
2. Investigate Postal Code Partnership with Canada Post

4. Improving data quality

1. Define a reasonable data quality standard
2. Communicate and Educate data quality standards
3. Identify and Implement data security and integrity rules and routines

5. Provide quality support and services for data custodians and users

1. Define User Support Process
2. Define Technical Support Processes for Incident and Problem management
3. Implement Call / Incident Management Tool
4. Implement User Support Team
5. Implement Nova Scotia Geomatics Centre Service Centre
6. Develop, Train, and Implement Communication Plan
7. Design, Develop, and Implement Service Level Management Reports
8. Define Technical Support Processes for Change and Release Management

APPENDIX A - WORKING GROUP

MEMBERS

Sheena Abbey, Service Level Management, Geographic Information Services

Bob Caldwell, Manager, Nova Scotia Geomatics Centre

Rob Doiron, Executive Director, Information Management Services

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