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Montgomery County Receives National Recognition for Its Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Practices

Montgomery County has received national recognition for its implementation of configuration management practices in geographic information systems (GIS) by Public Technology Institute (PTI). PTI named the County an Innovation Lab -- a "mark of excellence" that recognizes local government for the successful deployment of a technology solution or practice.

Configuration management is a field originating in the software engineering industry. It provides the necessary processes and tools to control change and manage data impacted by change, thus reducing the risk of errors and bad data.

By applying configuration management concepts in a GIS operating environment, Montgomery County's Department of Technology Services worked through the challenges of incorporating formalized information technology processes into the fast growing "data-based" GIS industry where there is a need for procedures to assure data integrity and control.

"Montgomery County has taken a proven strategy that works in the private sector and adapted it to meet the needs of County agencies and ultimately, the public," said Alan Shark, Executive Director of PTI. "The County's efforts serve as a model that other local governments can benefit from."

Montgomery County's implementation of configuration management in GIS is particularly important as the use of GIS data and systems by County agencies grows. Because geographic information systems users include law enforcement and fire and rescue services, maintaining the quality and integrity of the County's GIS data is vital to ensuring public safety.

According to Montgomery County Chief Information Officer E. Steven Emanuel, "Montgomery County GIS Services has taken the traditional software configuration management process and applied it successfully to geographic information services and data support to ensure that information is current, accurate and version controlled. The configuration management process allows the County's essential users to depend on the accuracy of map information that is delivered, and be assured that all planned enhancements and changes are included in each release. This is another example of how the County's information practices demonstrate the business/IT partnership that promotes investment in technology to enhance services and support residents."

Public Technology Institute is a national, non-profit technology research organization. Created by and for cities and counties, PTI promotes innovation and collaboration for leaders in government, and advances the use of technology to improve the management and delivery of services to residents. For more information, visit www.pti.org.

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