

Utilizing GIS Technology for COVID Compliant Business Partnership Program

1. OVERVIEW

Utilizing GIS Technology for the COVID Compliant Business Partnership Program to facilitate distribution of relief funds to small businesses throughout the County.

2. CHALLENGE

The challenge was to disburse the program's funds as quickly as possible while ensuring distribution to the businesses most in need. To do this, the COVID Compliant Business Partnership Program needed a technical system that could solve the following problems:

- Scale to securely receive and store thousands of applications over a very short time period.
- Allow staff to efficiently prioritize, review, and verify the incoming information and documents.
- Provide program managers with tools to monitor the numbers of applications being processed, identify those which were taking unusually long to process, and export completed applications for payment processing.
- Inform business owners of the status of their application.
- Share with the general public which local businesses were open and committed to maintaining compliance with all health and safety regulations.

3. SOLUTION

An online application form for business owners was built using Esri's Survey123 for ArcGIS application and hosted in Esri's online cloud, ArcGIS Online. This platform supported presenting the form in both English and Spanish, as well as through assistive technologies such as screen-readers; and scaled effortlessly to handle the initial wave of applications. Using a Configurable-Off-The-Shelf (COTS) technology also meant that the form could be configured, tested, and deployed within days of receiving the requirements. Integration of GIS allowed for geography-based analysis and tracking of funding throughout the County. Creating custom applications to support the program would have required months of development. Instead, by using easily-configured GIS technology, the technology to support the program was in place in less than two weeks and funding was able to be delivered into the hands of local businesses shortly

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afterwards. The program launched and operated without significant technical issues for eight months, adjusting rapidly and continually to the evolving scope of the program.

4. INNOVATION

The innovative use of GIS technology to support the COVID Compliant Business Partnership Program allowed the County of San Bernardino County to rapidly disperse much needed CARES funding to small businesses throughout the County. As well as a creative means to collect and process as many applications as possible as rapidly as possible - using GIS for this purpose supported geographic analysis of funding allocations, sharing of relevant applications with smaller sub-jurisdictions, and location-based advertisement of approved businesses.

The cloud-based structure of the ArcGIS system allowed sharing of relevant information about the applications, and the program as a whole, with all stakeholders at all levels within the County. Public views of the data provided transparency into County efforts to support residents through the pandemic.

5. RESULTS

More than 9,000 applications were submitted and processed through the reviewer application. 65% of those applications were approved. Nearly \$30 million were allocated to applicants who used the funding to purchase PPE, pay bills, and to hire and retain staff. 1,315 of the approved businesses created profiles to help advertise their business through a public application that was accessed nearly 10,000 times by the public.

6. REPLICABILITY

Another county could easily replicate the COVID Compliant Business Partnership Program utilizing Esri's ArcGIS Online, Survey123, data management, Dashboards, Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS, and Experience Builder for ArcGIS.

7. PROJECT CONTACT

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