

# Alberta Data Partnerships: A Public-Private Partnership Approach to SDI

A new brand and long-term agreement with the Provincial Government of Alberta, Canada, will provide more opportunities for Spatial Data Warehouse Ltd. (SDW), AltaLIS, Alberta's geospatial community and all Albertans. SDW was created in 1996 as a not-for-profit company to take over digital mapping activities – at that time primarily Cadastral Mapping – that were previously handled by the Government of Alberta. The original board members were the provincial utility companies and the Alberta government. In 1999, a joint venture agreement was signed with AltaLIS, a for-profit private corporation, to provide the day-to-day updating, licensing, sales and distribution of cadastral mapping data, while SDW remained a virtual company focused on governance and strategy.

Today, SDW board membership has broadened its depth to also include organisations that represent the energy and forestry sectors, urban and rural municipalities, and the Alberta Energy Regulator. This board structure has strengthened SDW's governance and strategic vision, as well as the ability to leverage this group of land users to explore unique mapping business opportunities. The products offered by the joint venture have continued to expand as SDW and AltaLIS have worked together to provide title and public lands disposition mapping, as well as to become as a distributor for imagery, Lidar and utility data.

This business model is extremely successful in delivering important mapping products at low costs to users and significant savings to provincial taxpayers. The introduction of the cadastral mapping product eliminated operational data maintenance and management costs (CAD2.5 to 3 million annually in 1996) to the Government of Alberta. The filing fee charged to those who submit plans to be integrated into the fabric has not changed during that time, and the licence fee to customers who access the final product has been cut in half.

Economic, regulatory, legislative and technological changes have presented SDW with new opportunities, and the organisation has recently rebranded itself as 'Alberta Data Partnerships' (ADP)[<http://www.abdatapartnerships.ca>]. ADP's tagline is 'Sustainable Spatial Data for Responsible Development' and a big part of that is its commitment to open data, exploring new business models and stakeholder engagement. 'Responsible development' means regulating, building and operating in Alberta as transparently and efficiently as possible to meet the needs of all stakeholders. Having accurate, affordable and accessible data to support Alberta's industry, government and the public is important to ensure that Albertans achieve the best possible outcomes from the development of the land base.

On 1 November 2014, ADP signed a new long-term mapping data agreement with the Government of Alberta allowing ADP to undertake greater investment in technology with AltaLIS as part of the joint venture. It will also enable ADP to more fully explore other business opportunities with government and private industry.

A key deliverable of the agreement was to begin distribution of selected data products at no-cost through AltaLIS – data that will be subject to the Alberta Open Government Licence. This is the first public-private partnership that the Government of Alberta has entered into to distribute open data and is a result of ADP's ongoing efforts to offer more no-cost data to its stakeholders.

Initial feedback on the new brand, 'Agreement', and particularly the availability of open data products has been very positive. Information sessions held in November 2014 in Edmonton and Calgary have given stakeholders the chance to share their ideas and opportunities as ADP undertakes strategic renewal.

Learn more about the GSDI Association and how to participate [here](#).