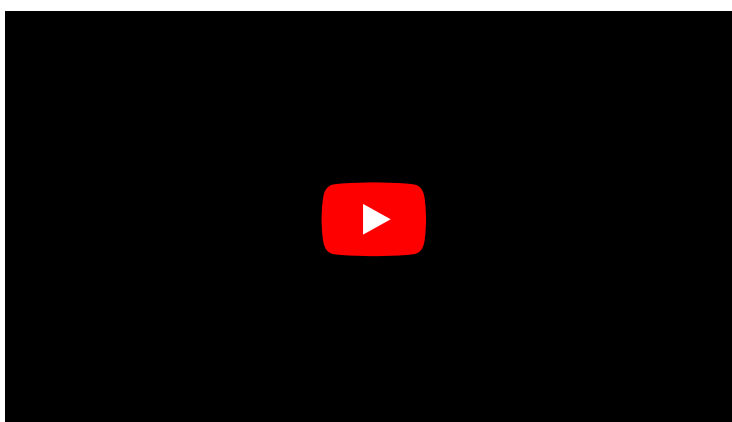# GIS Solutions to Educate Smart Communities

Esri and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) have taken steps to strengthen their strategic relationship to bring forward the best practices in building smart communities. The smart communities movement advocates that municipalities and counties rethink the way local governments deliver services and address the issues of our times. At the heart of these efforts is the call to use technology and data to create stronger, more resilient, and more business-savvy cities and counties.

ICMA, which serves local government management professionals worldwide and identifies leading practices in the field, and Esri, a global leader in GIS technology, have partnered to produce a series of case studies that highlight leading practices of a well-run government.

Citizens are calling on governments to be more transparent, efficient, collaborative and productive, said ICMA senior technical specialist Cory Fleming. In smart communities, local government officials use technology and data to address community needs and make sound policy decisions. These case studies bring to light the smart ways communities are creating a better quality of life for their residents.

Smart Communities Solutions

This effort is part of Esri's work to ensure that all governments have the opportunity to explore and use smart communities solutions that will move the nation forward in responding to the most challenging issues of our times, said Esri director of government markets Christopher Thomas. Local agencies can use GIS software to enable interdepartmental collaboration through open data sources, mobile access to highly specified maps and information, and the efficient collection of real-time data.

The case study series demonstrates how communities of all sizes – whether a small county, such as Carver County, Minnesota, or a large city, such as Charlotte, North Carolina (both USA) – can benefit from using a smart communities approach to problem solving.

Carver County is a prime example of how ArcGIS is used to save time, manpower, and expense when processing tax data and land parcel inspections. Meanwhile, in Charlotte, the city uses GIS solutions to increase citizen engagement and governmental transparency with open data collaboration. ArcGIS Open Data was used to create Open Charlotte, a portal that shares the city's spatial and non-spatial data, which is used by local developers to build applications connecting city residents and their government.

Charlotte and Carver County are just two examples of what's possible when government engages its population of tech-minded volunteers with the common goal of making their community more responsive, said Thomas.

The partnership will continue later this year through workshops and exhibits held at ICMA's 102nd Annual Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, USA. At the conference, members can take advantage of this effort to offer every city, town and county the opportunity to be a smart community.

For more information on GIS for smart communities, visit esri.com/smartcommunities.