

Enhancing Public Safety With High-Res Aerial Data For 911

When it comes to public safety, time matters and every second carries weight. The State of Tennessee discovered how to improve their GIS activities, particularly in 911 situations, with clear, consistently accurate data from Vexcel.

Like many government entities, the State of Tennessee is no stranger to aerial imagery. For nearly 20 years, they received imagery for roughly one quarter of the state on an annual basis. But they were quickly realizing some fast-growing truths about their data.

"The biggest concern was it didn't meet all the needs we had for imagery," shared Dennis Pedersen, Director of GIS Services. "We were seeing the industry of aerial imagery capture had evolved and there were opportunities with a more commodity-based approach to imagery. We tried one service through Google that we learned with our partnerships through other states.

But when Google got out of it, we needed an alternative. And that's when we found Vexcel."



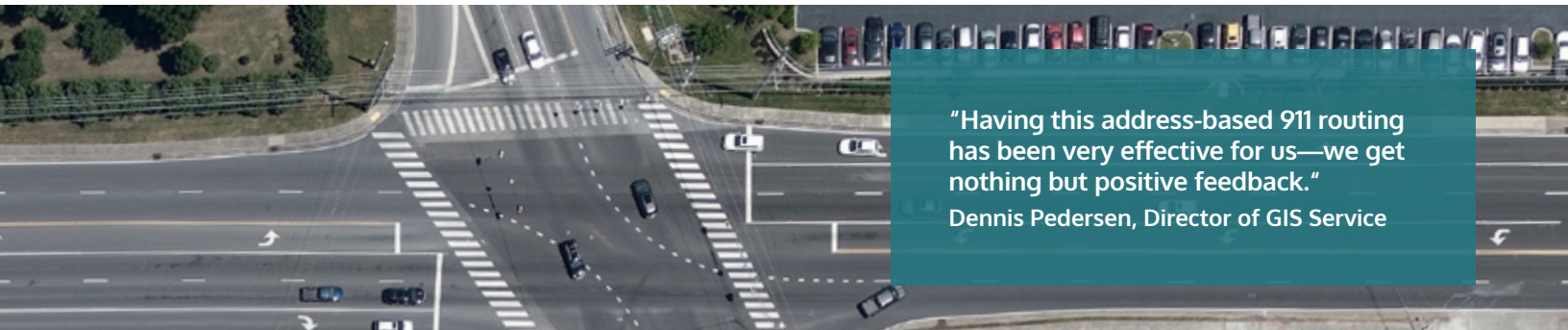
Using Vexcel's Data to Support Emergency Needs

For the past few years, the State of Tennessee has been a customer of Vexcel's, accessing the comprehensive geospatial data library for state agencies, local governments, Tennessee Valley Authority and local 911 districts.

"We work with the local 911 districts across the state to connect them with Vexcel's high-res ortho imagery through various mapping platforms statewide," shared Pedersen. "It was really the need to give dispatch credible information when receiving emergency calls."

When an emergency call comes into the dispatch call center, the operator taking the call has a map display open created from Vexcel's imagery, along with other pertinent GIS data sets. Their goal? Quickly identify where the call is coming from with confidence and accuracy.

"Having this address-based 911 routing has been very effective for us—we get nothing but positive feedback. And since it's used by general GIS practitioners across state government, it's helped improve many workflows since they get access to more current imagery that they couldn't obtain otherwise. It's all about leveraging the data which matches a motto we look to which is 'build it once, use it many times.'"



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Creating Safer Communities

By using Vexcel's data inside powerful GIS platforms, Pedersen has observed the changes that have helped create safer, improved responses for emergency responders. With the ability to download data and create county-wide orthomosaics for a local copy of imagery, dispatch has greater clarity and enhanced information to support 911 operations.

"We hear how seconds matter and that means so much more when you're talking with 911 dispatch and being able to locate someone or pinpoint better routes for emergency vehicles. And the fact that we can also share this data with any group statewide is a huge deal."

Key Benefits

As the State of Tennessee continues to expand their usage of the Vexcel dataset, Pedersen knows the benefits will only continue to grow as they expand and train others on how to employ imagery in many areas.

"I think one of the biggest benefits we've seen already has to do with the consistent state-wide dataset we have that is very cost effective for us and really does meet the needs of a wide range of users. Economies of scale is critically important in government and Vexcel gives us reliable, quality data that is very affordable."

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