

Brooklyn Park, MN

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# Enhancing data flow and breaking down departmental siloes

*With a population of more than 80,000, Brooklyn Park is the sixth largest city in Minnesota and the fourth largest in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.*

### About Brooklyn Park

While relatively small (one full-time GIS coordinator and one GIS intern for six months each year), Brooklyn Park's GIS department acts as a central information hub, and supports all City departments, including: administration, community development, finance, fire, operations and maintenance, law enforcement, and parks and recreation.

### The Challenge

Until 2012, Brooklyn Park offered a single, decade-old desktop GIS application and nine PDF maps on the City's website. The application was used to manually cut shapefiles of their GIS datasets, leaving GIS data and maps perpetually out-of-date.

"Our legacy system made it very difficult and time consuming to maintain and update the application," describes John Nerge, GIS Coordinator for the City of Brooklyn Park, "and while we'd technically been active with enterprise GIS for more than 10 years, we knew it was time modernize our approach."

### The Solution

Since implementing Geocortex Essentials in 2013, Brooklyn Park has developed various internal and public-facing applications, all aimed at streamlining City processes and making important information readily accessible to staff.

Their main internal Geocortex application, which they named *CityView*, connects staff to all of the City's major data sources. With a single search, users can find property information from the assessment database, licensing information from the land management and permitting system, police records from the public safety record management system (RMS), and information stored natively in the City's enterprise GIS, which contains more than 70 map and image layers. *CityView* includes workflows for printing maps and mailing labels, and several map layers contain links to related documents, such as plat drawings and utility as-built drawings. In addition to the main interface, *CityView* has seven department-focused applications that have 140 custom configuration settings between them.

“ By maintaining a focus on building easy-to-use applications, we’ve seen great uptake in the use of our internal and public-facing applications. ”

John Nerge, GIS Coordinator, City of Brooklyn Park

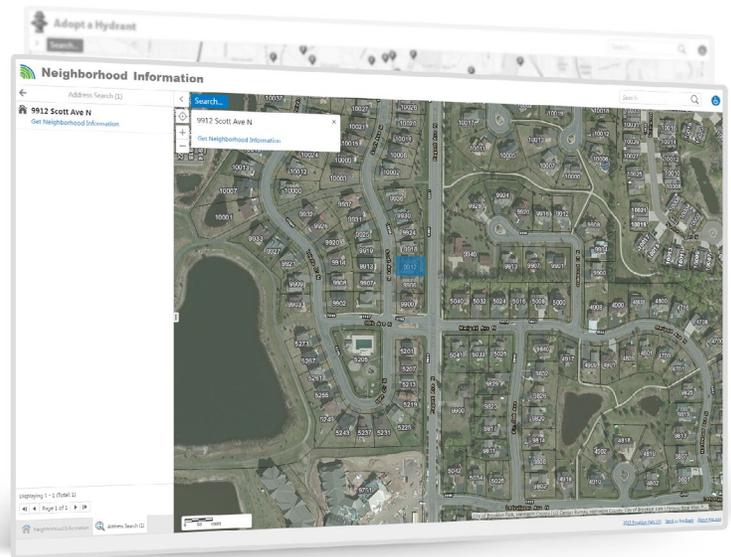
Brooklyn Park also has two public-facing applications: *Neighborhood Info* and *Adopt a Hydrant*. *Neighborhood Info* is the City’s flagship public application, giving residents, businesses and real estate agents the ability to view over 50 data points on any given property. *Adopt a Hydrant* is part of Brooklyn Park’s crowdsourcing campaign, aimed at getting residents to volunteer to shovel out their hydrants when it snows in the winter.

## The Results

Brooklyn Park’s internal applications have significantly streamlined business operations and made GIS – previously a foreign concept to many – profoundly ordinary and accessible to City staff. Historically, staff access to information was limited to the databases and systems in their particular departments; a request would have to be submitted if they wanted information that belonged to another department. “Our Geocortex applications have really helped break down those department siloes, which has vastly improved inter-departmental communication and efficiency,” John explains.

Brooklyn Park’s public facing applications have also seen strong adoption throughout the community. *Neighborhood Info* has been used 1700 times in 2016, and 76 fire hydrants have been adopted.

According to Brooklyn Park, working with both ArcGIS Online and Geocortex Essentials has influenced their attention to designing simple, yet powerful web GIS applications. John and team have focused on leveraging configuration and workflow technology to simplify the experience for end-users and administrators. “By maintaining a focus on building easy-to-use applications, we’ve seen great uptake in the use of our internal and public-facing applications,” adds John. “We’re excited to further integrate Geocortex and Esri technology into our day-to-day operations over the coming years.”



Brooklyn Park’s flagship *Neighborhood Info* application

Among other plans for the future, Brooklyn Park has two initiatives underway now. The first is an internal project that will connect CityView to the City’s utility billing information, and allows for the ability to view where the biggest utility consumers are, as well as verify service availability.

The second project Brooklyn Park will soon be launching is *Adopt a Park*, a public-facing application that is a companion to *Adopt a Hydrant*, and brings residents together to volunteer their time to clean local parks.

### Neighborhood Info:

<https://gis.brooklynpark.org/NeighborhoodInfo>

### Adopt a Hydrant:

<https://gis.brooklynpark.org/AdoptaHydrant>