

**A SPEECH BY THE MAYOR OF WELLINGTON  
KERRY PRENDERGAST  
AT THE NEW ZEALAND GEOSPATIAL OFFICE  
ELEVATION DATA SESSIONS  
AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE 2008  
AT 9AM**

Good morning.

It is an absolute pleasure to welcome you here this morning. To those of you who have travelled to be here, a very warm Wellington welcome. And if you flew in, I hope you could enjoy the stunning views from above our beautiful city without thinking too much about work!

I'd like to acknowledge Doctor Dorota Grejner-Brzezinska's involvement with these sessions, as I understand she's generously agreed to give up some of her sightseeing time to spend more time with you – [to her] I hope you like what you see of our city and might consider returning for a longer visit one day.

I'm very pleased to be opening these sessions on elevation data, as I'm very much aware how important they are as a geospatial data-set... and that what you do helps cities like ours function.

I recently had the pleasure of meeting Jeremy Harris, the former Mayor of Honolulu City, and he talked with great enthusiasm about the use of G.I.S. in his city.

It was a fantastic example of the way G.I.S. technology can be used by a local authority. Honolulu was able to make significant cost savings, improve its operational efficiency and introduce new services, by developing a strategic approach to all geospatial information. Most importantly, it got the organisation working together, instead of in silos.

In Honolulu, there is now much better public engagement, and elected representatives are able to make more informed decisions because information has been analysed and presented in a more visual – and therefore more useful – way. There is now extensive use of virtual reality to show how urban design projects will look upon completion.

We have taken some of Honolulu's lessons and experiences and hope to apply them to our own situation.

I'm glad there is a strong local government theme in this afternoon's presentations, and hope you enjoy the presentations from Wellington City Council's own team, among others.

Geospatial information is, I can assure you, increasingly being recognised as basic infrastructure for many local government needs. We, the politicians, are beginning to understand how geospatial information can help us make better decisions and to monitor and improve many of our services.

The G.I. S. professional is becoming a vital contributor to efficiency within local authorities such as ours. Information from many different sources can be analysed and combined with high quality aerial photos and terrain information to help Councils plan for the future.

Wellington City has lots of very good base data and we want to become a leader in the way G.I.S. data is used. Our G.I.S. systems were upgraded just last month, and this will lead to improved access and data-use in future.

G.I.S. has come a long way since the days of draughting offices in the 1980s... and the potential for future improvements is enormous. G.I.S. professionals need to continue to work together to help organisations understand what is now possible and what can happen in the future.

It's an exciting time to be in your industry. I hope you have an enjoyable and educational day.

Thank you.

**The speech delivered may vary from this text.**

