Abstract(s) in this session

**Lessons Learned in GIS Strategic Planning**  
*Ashley Hitt, GISP, Director, GIS Services, Connected Nation, Louisville, KY*

**ABSTRACT TEXT:** Strong organizations continually plan for future developments and updates to their current product offerings. Developing a GIS-specific strategic plan ensures that departmental and organizational leadership are on the same page when it comes to identifying how GIS empowers internal staff, as well as clients and external stakeholders. A GIS strategic plan should take into account staff skills, resources, needs, potential risks, and other technologies, as well as internal and external processes and communications. While the process as a whole can seem daunting, your organization will be a much better position for sustainability and setting stakeholder expectations.

In this presentation, lessons learned from recent strategic planning activities are shared, including self-assessment, mission-based collaboration, setting meaningful goals, innovation, and re-assessment. These lessons learned will hopefully inspire you to take the first step to developing a GIS strategic plan or encourage you to revisit a previously developed plan. As a GIS leader in your organization, it’s a must have!

**Strategic Planning, Team Building, and Change Management in a Global AEC Co.**  
*John Hurd, GISP, Geospatial Practice Leader, CH2M, Wyoming, OH*

**ABSTRACT TEXT:** In 2009, CH2M sold off it’s division that included the companies GIS resources. This left a major void in professional talent critical to delivering competitive AEC services. In 2014, the company’s divisions decided to rebuild the geospatial technology capabilities that were lost. Throughout this process, many hard lessons were learned, but also tremendous opportunities were gained. Rebuilding the firm's geospatial practice required strategic planning, stakeholder support, staffing, IT coordination, and significant change management processes.

Since 2014, the company has hired or acquired over 70 GIS professionals, transition projects from various sub-contractors, and re-integrated these technologies into core operating procedures and services. All of this rebuilding has occurred while the company has gone through two major restructuring events. The lessons learned were numerous but the highlights were the value of strategic planning, the importance in stakeholder engagement and support, and dealing with change management throughout the entire process.