



Nat'l Geospatial-Intelligence Agency HQ: Feds Spend \$1.7 Billion To Acquire 97 Acres In St. Louis

The NGA answers to the Office of Director of National Intelligence and is charged with tracking everything that moves on planet earth. It is the ultimate in total surveillance in order to 'master the human domain'. □
TN Editor

City officials announced Friday that they had finalized the transfer of 97 acres north of downtown to the federal government for the construction of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's \$1.7 billion western headquarters, capping nearly four years of work assembling the site for one of the city's largest economic development projects in decades.

"We're all excited. We are thankful for all the help along the way from both the public and private sector and a great deal of support from the state of Missouri," said St. Louis Development Corp. Director Otis Williams, who shepherded the project for the city first under former Mayor Francis Slay and now Mayor Lyda Krewson. "This was a huge

undertaking. It's a sigh of relief to get it all done."

City officials fought hard for years to retain the NGA, which employs some 3,100 people in a facility on the Mississippi riverfront near the Anheuser-Busch brewery. Friday's announcement is a major milestone in a project that even as recently as this summer [appeared potentially at risk](#).

The official transfer will happen in the coming weeks as top officials complete documents and agreements. This spring, the Army Corps of Engineers, which is overseeing the construction, plans to pick a general contractor from three finalists. Construction could start by late 2019, with the facility's completion anticipated in 2024 or 2025.

Since the NGA [decided in 2016 to build on the city's north side](#), St. Louis has spent more than \$114 million to buy hundreds of properties, build a new facility for an [industrial laundry company](#), demolish buildings, [clear the land](#) and grade it. There have also been legal costs for eminent domain for those owners who didn't wish to sell, and last-minute court tussles over the summer with the developer and bank that started the whole project, Paul McKee and the Bank of Washington.

The complex financing relied on strong support from the Missouri Department of Economic Development, which started under former Gov. Jay Nixon and into the current administration, and bond underwriting professionals at Stifel, Williams said.

The costs will ultimately be repaid with city earnings taxes and state income taxes from the NGA employees, a worthwhile expense, officials say, for a major project in an area that needs investment and a far better alternative than losing the jobs, as initially feared.

As the federal intelligence agency looked for a site to build a headquarters for its second-largest facility, St. Louis officials were up against counterparts in St. Clair County, who offered an open field ready for development near Scott Air Force Base as an alternative.

Both Republicans and Democrats on the Missouri side of the region's Congressional delegation lobbied for the project but faced an Illinois

Congressional delegation with members close to former President Barack Obama, a former Illinois senator.

“When it first came up, it was looked at as a long shot,” Williams said. “I was told many times that you guys don’t have a chance. I told folks that we were in this to win it. We went all out.”

Ultimately, NGA leaders indicated a desire to stay in the urban core as a way to recruit tech talent and attract private companies that support the agency’s mission. That, coupled with what some saw as the Obama administration’s commitment to urban renewal, allowed the city to retain the facility despite the daunting task of buying out dozens of property owners and clearing land that had held generations of residents.

In a statement, NGA Director Robert Cardillo called it a “historic day.”

“Building upon our history in St. Louis, the new campus in North City will enable NGA to deliver our mission through the end of the century and beyond,” he said. “We look forward to continue teaming with the talent and innovation of the St. Louis region.”

Development in the area would be the most significant project in memory on the city’s North Side, which has long struggled from disinvestment.

Mayor Lyda Krewson pointed to the planned facility’s proximity to downtown, area universities and the Cortex tech district, which will help grow the cluster of geospatial and mapping technology jobs in the region that support and are supported by the NGA’s workforce and contractors.

“NGA is like any other employer, and their goal is to attract and retain talent,” she said. “What we’re looking to do through the startup community, the tech community, is to support the businesses in the area and the residents in the area to make sure there’s good development in and around the area.”

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Air Force Wants AI Tools to Solve Surveillance Data Glut

Herein lies the problem: Surveillance produces a tsunami of data that cannot be analyzed fast enough without a) supercomputers and b) Artificial Intelligence. Technocrats are in their element. □ TN Editor

Like other military services and Department of Defense components, the Air Force is finding itself overloaded these days with streaming intelligence data, and is looking to machine learning and artificial intelligence to help its analysts quickly put all that information to practical use.

Specifically, the service is looking to fuse Multi-intelligence, or Multi-INT, which can consist of data in multiple formats from manned and unmanned aircraft, satellites, and ground stations, as well as other sources. The volume and variety of that data can leave analysts unable to

parse it all and knowledgeably help inform the decision-making process. So the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) has issued a [Request for Information](#) looking for input from industry, academia, and other government labs on applicable tools that are available or in development.

An overabundance of data is nothing new—the Air Force has been complaining about the [dangers of sensor-driven overload](#) since the early 2000s—but the need to solve the problem is becoming more urgent. The Air Force is moving to a new exploitation paradigm called [Sense, Identify, Attribute, Share](#) (SIAS) that requires new approaches to exploiting Multi-INT, according to the RFI.

The Air Force's [Next Generation ISR Dominance Flight Plan](#), signed in July this year, states that the service “must have the architecture and infrastructure to enable machine intelligence, including automation, human-machine teaming, and ultimately, artificial intelligence,” which will define the service's Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) efforts going forward.

“Technology components designed to support SIAS will need to ingest, reason over, and inform both analysts and other emerging technologies designed to automate both ISR database queries and physical collection,” the RFI states.

The Air Force is far from alone in looking to use AI and machine learning to deal with the onslaught of intelligence data. The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) wants to use the technologies to get a handle on the massive amounts of [geospatial intelligence](#) (GEOINT) it collects, focusing on the geospatial content within its Multi-INT data sources. NGA most recently awarded [seven one-year research contracts](#) for applying advanced algorithms and machine learning to characterize geospatial data. The awards were part of the agency's three-year Boosting Innovative GEOINT Broad Agency Announcement (BIG BAA) initiative, which since 2016 has awarded a series of contracts targeting specific topic areas.

The Department of Defense's [Project Maven](#) is taking an algorithmic

approach to analyzing millions of hours of full-motion video from drones and other sources (and was the center of controversy when some Google employees objected to the company's involvement; Google eventually [decided to leave](#) the project). The Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA) also is developing AI systems in other areas of what it calls [anticipatory intelligence](#), such as its [Deep Intermodal Video Activity](#) (DIVA) program to automate the monitoring and analysis of endless hours of surveillance video.

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The Technologies Building The Smart Cities Of The Future

Smart Cities are being designed by Big Tech companies using failed urban planning designs from the 1940s and 50s, and they are a recipe for disaster. When the Public-Private Partnerships fail, the municipalities will be left with the hubris. □ TN Editor

By 2050, 68 percent of the total global population will live in cities, according to the United Nations. By then, the world population will be

9.7 billion and 11.2 billion by 2100.

The updated report from the United Nations states that currently, [55 percent of the world's population](#) lives in urban areas. That means around 2.5 billion more people will be living in cities by 2050.

India, China, and Nigeria combined will represent 35 percent of the projected urban population growth between 2018 and 2050. Cities must prepare for the population explosion, planning accordingly in anticipation to the times to come.

Over 700 cities from around the world presented their smart city projects at the [Smart City Congress and Expo](#) in Barcelona, Spain this year. It is expected that the number of cities adopting new technologies to help them become smarter is going to grow pretty fast in the next few years.

A smart city is a city where urban planning is conceived with the ultimate goal of connecting everything to each other using state-of-the-art technologies. This connectivity, which creates a vast amount of data, is then used to improve city services and infrastructure as well as improving citizens environment and quality of life.

Because [smart and sustainable](#) city urban planning affects everyone, it's crucial that we know and understand what the technologies involved in building smart cities are and how they can help achieve the ultimate goal of urban transformation into the truly smart cities of the future.

5G technologies

Without a powerful network, nothing could be possible in a smart city. [5G technology](#) powers the next level of connectivity for industries and society. Service providers are actively working on 5G technologies and how they are going to power all smart city networks. Without 5G, none of the other smart city technologies mentioned below would be possible.

Sensors

Sensors are embedded in every physical device that makes up the Internet of Things ecosystem. From your smartwatch that counts your daily steps to [connected cars](#), everything in the [smart home](#), and traffic lights.

Most of everything you are in touch with today has sensors collecting and transmitting data to the cloud. The network of connected things, or Internet of Things (IoT) interconnects all the devices making them work together.

There is a variety of different sensors used in IoT. Here are some:

Internet of Things (IoT)

The Internet of Things (IoT) is what keeps everything in the city connected. It's the spine of the city which allows each movement and connects each dot.

IoT offers advanced connectivity of smart devices, wearables, smart home appliances and services, medical devices, connected vehicles, smart entertainment, smart buildings, smart public mobility, [smart agriculture](#), smart city infrastructure, and all systems and services that go beyond machine-to-machine (M2M) communication.

Everything that is a part of a smart city needs to be connected to each other so they can communicate with each other as part of a whole. The IoT provides the body of communicating devices that provides seamless communication providing smart solutions to every situation and problems.

Geospatial Technology

The right way to build urban planning for smart cities requires accuracy and the analysis and use of detailed data. This is exactly the role that Geospatial or [Geolocation](#) technologies play. They provide the underlying

foundation upon which every smart city solution can be built.

Geospatial technology provides location and the necessary framework for collecting and analyzing data, transforming such data in a way that facilitates software-based solutions around [smart city infrastructure](#).

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