

## CASE STUDY

Shellharbour City Council is a progressive Council that is focused on developing a sustainable municipality where nature is balanced with rural and urban settings. Dedicated to conserving and enhancing its natural and built environments, Shellharbour City Council aims to foster a safe, healthy, informed and caring community that builds a strong and diverse local economy.



## Shellharbour City Council

*Located approximately 100 kilometers from the center of Sydney in the Illawarra region of New South Wales, Shellharbour City Council boasts a residential base of 60,000 people and anticipates this will grow to 75,000 people by 2010. Supporting and managing this growth has been the focus of all Shellharbour Council activities for many years and much of the infrastructure that is in place today is a result of careful and meticulous planning.*

### Challenge

The Geographic Information System (GIS) team is an integral part of the Council's strategic planning and day-to-day services for the public. The GIS team maintains geographic and land information such as: lot boundaries, road names, deposited plan numbers, road centerlines, house numbers, council and suburb boundaries and zoning. They also provide the Council, the business community and the public with high quality maps, map books and spatially-related data.

The use of GIS is fundamental to the Council's success and vision. With a predicted population growth of more than 2,000 annually, the Council needed to establish a strong and reliable GIS infrastructure to help ensure sustainable growth in the region. To achieve this effectively, Shellharbour City Council required an enterprise GIS solution that could enhance its existing GIS system. It was necessary for the solution to have, at a minimum, the same capabilities as the existing system, but also to be easily deployed across the Council, and include a web solution that was cost-effective, scalable and easy to use.

The enterprise-wide GIS solution was required to automate spatial information management processes, provide a method for viewing digital maps and related information internally and externally, as well as act as the Council's hub for a wealth of spatial data sets — which range from map interfaces to statistical data. Focused on achieving e-Government targets and improving its services to local residents and businesses, the GIS team's greatest challenge was improvement of response times to Council inquiries. It was necessary to provide citizens with 24/7 access to information in a cost-effective manner via the website.

Previously, customer inquiries were received via phone, fax and mail. Responding to these public inquiries only during normal business hours meant diverting personnel from other tasks. The goal was to implement a GIS web solution that attracted Council members, the business community and the public to the website to obtain answers to general inquiries.

### Solution

In 2000, MapInfo provided Shellharbour City Council with an enterprise-wide solution that comprised MapInfo EasiMaps and MapInfo Encounter. David Murphy, Manager of Land and Geographic Information Systems at Shellharbour City Council, said that the potential of MapInfo's solutions was unique, innovative and complementary to the Council's requirements for a GIS solution. Prior to deploying MapInfo's technology onto the Shellharbour website, the Council had been using MapInfo's technology internally to answer customer phone, fax and mail inquiries and also to assist in the strategic planning of the city's future developments. The decision to expand from a MapInfo desktop technology to an enterprise solution and to deploy MapInfo's technology on the website was instigated by the introduction of the MapInfo Access Program (MAP). This allowed the immediate deployment of EasiMaps on every desktop and enabled the Council to focus on its web-based technologies using Encounter.



“Over time, we hope to see a reduction in time spent answering simple enquiries and we are sure that our customers, who use the Internet, will lower their costs by having easy and fast access to information without having to make direct contact with the Council.”

David Murphy, Manager of Land and Geographic Information Systems at Shellharbour City Council

Shellharbour City Council took the next step in the MapInfo solution suite by replacing its Encounter website with the new Exponare™ Public, which went live in November 2004.

EasiMaps, built on MapInfo Professional, is still used as the desktop inquiry and mapping system. EasiMaps will be phased out in 2005 and Exponare™ Enquiry will be the preferred method for users to find, display and analyze spatial data, as well as to produce high quality maps with ease. Exponare Enquiry will further promote the use of spatial information solutions to a whole organization through its user-friendliness and tailored functionality.

Suitable for Intranet, Internet or Extranet deployment, Exponare is used to integrate and present the Council’s data in a way that is intelligible to the non GIS-literate public. Exponare is a scaleable, easily customized and implemented solution. The added benefit of Exponare is its flexibility with data formats, since Exponare can display maps directly from MapInfo TAB files, Oracle Spatial or SpatialWare for SQL Server files.

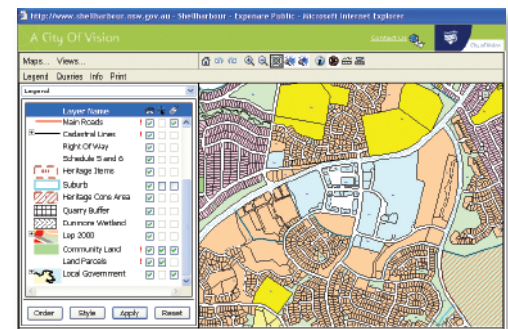
Shellharbour City Council has approximately 250 PCs currently running EasiMaps, which will be upgraded to Exponare Enquiry and deployed as the Intranet mapping solution. The Council’s web site was previously hosted externally, running its Encounter Online Mapping service. When the opportunity to host the site internally became available, the Council decided to set up Exponare Public rather than migrate the Encounter application.

This new Exponare Public Online Mapping service provides enhanced user-friendly access for the public to up-to-date street names, individual property information, house number lots and plan numbers, contours, zoning, electoral, waste collection as well as Council parks and facilities.

In addition, Shellharbour City Council has four libraries that provide free Internet access to the public enabling them to carry out mapping and property inquiries. The online maps can be viewed at [www.shellharbour.nsw.gov.au](http://www.shellharbour.nsw.gov.au)

## Results

For Shellharbour City Council, MapInfo’s enterprise solution assisted in managing front counter inquiries and reduced the burden on support staff and help desks by attracting the public to the



website, which improved the Council’s customer service and response times. The cost-effective solution also leverages the Council’s investment in data and technology.

David Murphy commented that once MapInfo’s Exponare Public solution was deployed, the feedback from users was very positive and the benefits of internal hosting and the ease of administration were realized instantly.

For example, Greg Goodman, consulting land surveyor, GA Goodman Consulting Group said, “This is a great invention. A job that used to take me an hour in phone calls or driving to the Council offices can now be done in under a minute.”

Lauren Goodman of GA Goodman Consulting Group also said, “The upgrade is excellent. The site layout, query functionality and printing capabilities are more user-friendly and the graphics have improved immensely.”

David Murphy also said, “There was an increase in the use of the the Council’s website and the online mapping function was being accessed by Council staff, local businesses and the public to obtain information on addresses, zoning, bush fire prone land, aerial photography, electoral and waste management details as well as Council’s community facilities. MapInfo’s solution simplifies the maintenance and management of Council’s spatial data and ensures the accuracy and integrity of data.” Mr. Murphy concluded, “MapInfo has been invaluable throughout this exercise and its efforts have been instrumental in getting us to where we are today. The efficiency and usefulness of having computerized maps at the fingertips of the Council, local businesses and community members, means Shellharbour can now easily and cost-effectively access and utilize the power of mapping.”

For more information:

### Corporate Headquarters/ Americas

One Global View  
Troy, NY 12180-8399  
1.800.619.2333  
[gov.sales@mapinfo.com](mailto:gov.sales@mapinfo.com)  
[www.mapinfo.com/government](http://www.mapinfo.com/government)

### Asia Pacific/Australia Office

61.2.9437.6255  
1.800.351.576  
[australia@mapinfo.com](mailto:australia@mapinfo.com)

### Europe/ United Kingdom Office

44.1753.848200  
[europe@mapinfo.com](mailto:europe@mapinfo.com)

