

Geospatial Professional Network

GIS Leadership: Building Organizational Capacity in GIS Organizations

Summary

This fact sheet summarizes practical leadership strategies for strengthening GIS organizations through prioritization, strategic planning, workforce development, governance, and visual management discussed on the Geospatial Professional Network GIS Leadership webinar in May 2026. It is important to align people, process, technology, governance, and culture to execute strategy effectively and adapt to Artificial Intelligence-driven change.

Key Message

Capacity is built deliberately.

Core Leadership Practices

Prioritize Relentlessly

- Use simple scoring systems to rank projects and balance priorities
- Clarify what matters now versus what matters later
- Reduce staff overwhelm through transparency

Visualize Work

- Use **Now / Next / Later** roadmaps
 - Now → Execute
 - Next → Prepare
 - Later → Explore
- Consider implementing Kanban boards and other visual project management techniques to track work
- Limit multitasking and work-in-progress

Build Capacity Intentionally

Successful GIS strategy depends on balancing:

People	Process	Technology	Governance	Culture
Skills	Workflows	Tools	Decision-Making	Adaptability

Prepare for Artificial Intelligence & Geospatial Artificial Intelligence

Leaders should:

- Prepare themselves and staff through education and training
- Modernize workflows
- Automate repetitive tasks
- Establish governance for emerging technologies

AI readiness is a workforce and culture challenge — not just a technology challenge.

Action Checklist for GIS Leaders

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| ☐ Prioritize projects transparently | ☐ Build AI education and training plans |
| ☐ Visualize workflows | ☐ Review and update governance structures |
| ☐ Limit work in progress | ☐ Align staffing with strategy |
| ☐ Assess organizational skill gaps | |
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Memorable Insights

1. "Knowing what's expected at work is one of the strongest drivers of engagement."
2. "Visualize your work and limit how much you work at one time."
3. "Capacity is built deliberately, not assumed."

Focus Areas: Strategic Planning • Organizational Capacity • Workforce Development • Governance • Visual Management • AI Readiness

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