

Metropolitan Transit Authority

Harris County



Texas Department of Transportation

City of Houston

Greater Houston Transportation and Emergency Management Center

**MEDIA ALERT  
November 16, 2005**

Contact: Maria Vera – 713-881-3278

**HOUSTON CELEBRATES GIS DAY 2005**

**“Dr. Dale Sawyer, from Rice University, and Dr. Kamesh Lulla, from NASA, will speak about the Asian Tsunami and Geography respectively, as Keynote Speakers”**

(Houston, Texas) ---- On Thursday, November 17, 2005 starting at 9:00a.m., the greater Houston region will officially celebrate Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Day 2005 at the University of Houston-Downtown Campus located at One Main Street in the Central Business District.

Presented by the Geographic Data Committee of the Houston-Galveston Area Council, GIS Day 2005 Opening Session will feature a variety of invited participants including: Texas Southern University Associate Dean for External Affairs Carroll G. Robinson, University of Houston Professor Dr. Alberto Gomez-Rivas, Harris County Appraisal Districts Chief Appraiser Jim Robinson, HGAC Executive Director Jack Steele, HGAC Chief Operating Officer Steve Howard, Deputy Assistant Director Cal Wolfert, Council Aide Chris Brown, Senior Assistant Director Roger Whitney, Assistant Director James Millage, and Michael Marcotte, Director of Public Works & Engineering for the City of Houston.

Geographic Information Systems or GIS Day 2005 is an international event that celebrates and recognizes the innovative ways in which GIS technologies are used to provide increased efficiency and the delivery of critical services to citizens by government agencies and private corporations. This technology is employed to address problems and challenges in many critical areas including homeland security, emergency response, environmental protection, health care, public works, zoning and land use, business site selection and many other areas.

Jim White, former Harris County Homeland Security and Office of Emergency Management Coordinator, stated, “In recent years, GIS technology has come to play an increasingly important role in emergency management. From long range planning to the coordination of specific events, GIS has become the premier tool for managing, analyzing, and distributing the large and diverse data handled during emergency management.” According to numerous industry reports and academic studies, most citizens are unaware they are using and/or benefiting from GIS technology when they view maps online, check their appraised property value online, or use GPS locator services in their cars.

Sponsors for GIS Day include: Michael Baker Jr. Inc., Tri-Global, Claunch & Miller, PBS&J, Tesselations, R7, Andre Bally, ESRI, and the University of Houston-Downtown.

For more information about GIS Day 2005, interview opportunities or to request a schedule of events, please contact Maria Vera, GIS Coordinator for Houston TranStar at 713-881-3278 or visit the GIS Day 2005 website located at [www.houstonareagisday.org](http://www.houstonareagisday.org).

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